

Libya rebels killed leader

HADEEL AL-SHALCHI
RAMI AL-SHAHEIBI

Associated Press

BENGHAZI, Libya (AP) — The Libyan rebels' military commander was killed by his comrades while in custody after he was arrested by the opposition's leadership on suspicion of



Rebel forces chief commander Abdel Fattah Younes speaks during a rally in the rebel-held city of Benghazi, Libya.

(AP Photo/Sergey Ponomarev)

treason, witnesses said Friday, in a sign of disarray that posed a major setback for the movement battling Moammar Gadhafi.

The slaying of Abdel-Fattah Younis raised fear and uncertainty in Benghazi, the de facto rebel capital. Thousands marched behind his coffin, wrapped in the rebels' tricolor flag, to the graveyard for his burial, chanting that he was a martyr "beloved by God." Troops fired a military salute as the coffin arrived, and angry and grieving supporters fired wildly into the air with automatic weapons. At the graveside, Younis' son, Ashraf, broke down, crying and screaming as they lowered the body into the ground and — in a startling and risky display in a city that was the first to shed Gadhafi's rule nearly six months ago — pleaded hysterically for the return of the Libyan leader to bring stability.

Continued on next page

NO BOEHNER



*House passes Boehner plan,
senate immediately rejects*

House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio gives a thumbs-up as he leaves the House Chamber on Capitol Hill in Washington, Friday, July 29, 2011, after House passage of his debt-limit legislation that was rewritten overnight to win the support of conservative holdouts. After a 24-hour delay and concessions to conservatives, House Republicans on Friday pushed through a fiscal plan that Senate Democrats quickly rejected in a standoff over the federal debt ceiling that was keeping the government on a path to potential default.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

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No Boehner

Continued from Front Page

CARL HULSE
M. D. SHEAR
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WASHINGTON — After a 24-hour delay and concessions to conservatives, House Republicans on Friday pushed through a fiscal plan that Senate Democrats quickly rejected in a standoff over the federal

A. Boehner to increase the federal debt ceiling in two stages. No Democrats supported the measure; 22 Republicans opposed it. The White House condemned it as a "political exercise."

"To the American people, I would say we tried our level best," Boehner said as he concluded a debate that had been abruptly halted Thursday evening when he fell short of the votes for victory. "We tried to do our

the Senate, but they hoped the pace would pick up once the Senate voted down the House proposal. That did not take long. Two hours after the House approved its plan, it was tabled in the Senate by a vote of 59-41, and Democrats took steps to move ahead with their proposal. Even as he prepared to squeeze Senate Republicans over his own plan to raise the debt limit through 2012, Sen. Harry Reid, the majority leader, pleaded for Republicans to come forward with ideas on how to make his proposal acceptable enough to win Senate passage and offer a life preserver to lawmakers to bring the crisis to an end.

"My door is open," Reid said as the Senate convened. "I will listen to any idea to get this done in a way that prevents a default and a dangerous downgrade to America's credit rating. Time is short, and too much is at stake, to waste even one more minute."

House Republicans, stung by their inability Thursday to secure enough votes from conservatives for their own plan to raise the debt ceiling, reconfigured their proposal to win over the holdouts. The revised plan would raise the debt ceiling for about six months in exchange for \$1 trillion in spending cuts. A second installment of \$1.6 trillion — expected to be needed in about six months — would hinge on congressional approval of a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, a provision added Friday to lure conservatives. □

Libya rebels kill commander



Supporters of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi during a pro-government rally, on a tour led by Libyan government officials in Tripoli. Rebel fighters maneuvered against government forces in western Libya on Thursday and reportedly seized several small towns and advanced on others with the mission of securing a major supply route near the Tunisian border.

(Moises Saman/The New York Times)

Continued from Front Page

"We want Moammar to come back! We want the green flag back!" he shouted at the crowd, referring to Gadhafi's national banner.

Younis' slaying appeared to shake both the rebels' leadership body, the National Transitional Council, and its Western allies, who have heavily backed the rebels controlling most of eastern Libya.

Two weeks ago, 32 nations including the U.S. made a major commitment by formally recognizing the opposition as the country's legitimate government — a significant boost after many allies hesitated in part because the rebels, a mix of tribes and factions, were largely an unknown quantity.

Those Western worries will likely be deepened if Younis' slaying opens major splits among the fractious rebels. Divisions would also

weaken the opposition's campaign to oust Gadhafi, which has largely stalled in a deadlock despite the four-month-old NATO bombing campaign against regime forces.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Mark Toner said the circumstances of Younis' death remained unclear, but he pressed the opposition to shore up any cracks in their front against Gadhafi.

"What's important is that they work both diligently and transparently to ensure the unity of the Libyan opposition," Toner said.

Younis' body was found Thursday, dumped outside Benghazi, along with the bodies of two colonels who were his top aides. They had been shot and their bodies burned.

Younis was Gadhafi's interior minister until he defected to the rebellion early in the uprising, which began in February, bringing his forces into the opposition ranks. □



Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev., left, listens as Senate Majority Whip Richard Durbin of Ill. tells reporters that they are moving ahead with a Democratic plan to trim the deficit and avert a debilitating default, Friday, July 29, 2011, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

debt ceiling that was keeping the government on a path to potential default. Despite a day of frenzied legislative maneuvering and another attempt by President Barack Obama to rally public opinion behind some kind of compromise, the two parties made no progress toward finding common ground, leaving Washington, Wall Street and much of the nation watching the clock toward a deadline of midnight Tuesday. Demonstrating the deep partisan divide coloring the budget fight, the House voted 218-210 to approve the plan endorsed by Speaker John

best for our country, but some people still say no." The House vote was the first act of what loomed as a weekend of tense legislative gamesmanship on Capitol Hill. With any agreement still eluding congressional leaders, lawmakers, aides and administration officials seemed to hold their breath, hoping that some compromise could mesh the competing proposals and rise above the increasingly confrontational tactics in Washington.

But aides and lawmakers said back-channel talks across the aisle were not making much progress in

Absentee soldier defiant in first court appearance

JAMIE STENGLE
Associated Press

WACO, Texas (AP) — An absentee soldier accused of plotting to launch an attack on Fort Hood was defiant during his first court appearance on Friday, shouting out the name of the Army psychiatrist blamed in the 2009 deadly shooting rampage at the same Texas base.

Investigators say Pfc. Naser Abdo, who cited his Muslim beliefs in requesting conscientious objector status last year, was found in a motel room three miles (five kilometers) from Fort Hood's main gate with a handgun, an article titled "Make a bomb in the kitchen of your Mom" and the ingredients for an explosive device, including gunpowder, shrapnel and pressure cookers. An article with that title appears in an al-Qaida magazine.

Abdo went absent without leave from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, early this month



In this June 14, 2011 photo, Pfc. Naser Abdo is shown in Nashville, Tenn. Abdo, an AWOL soldier from Ft. Campbell, Ky., is accused of plotting to launch an attack on Fort Hood, Texas.

(AP Photo)

after being charged with possessing child pornography.

Police and the Army say Abdo admitted plotting an attack, but in Fuhais, Jordan, his father insisted the allegations were "all lies from A to Z."

"My son loved people no matter who they are, whether Jews or Christians,"

Jamal Abdo said.

"Naser is not the kind of a person who harbors evil for the other people, he cannot kill anyone and he could not have done any bad thing."

Jamal Abdo, 52, is a Jordanian who lived near Fort Hood in Killeen for 25 years until he was deported from the United States last year

after being convicted of soliciting a minor.

His 21-year-old son was ordered held without bond Friday. Naser Abdo is charged with possession of an unregistered destructive device in connection with a bomb plot and has yet to enter a plea. If convicted, he could face up to 10 years in prison.

It was not immediately known if he would face additional charges. "Our office will pursue federal charges where the evidence takes us," said Daryl Fields, spokesman for federal prosecutors.

In court, Abdo refused to stand when the judge entered — U.S. marshals pulled him from his seat — but he answered the judge's questions politely.

On his way out, he yelled "Iraq 2006!" and the name of Abeer Qassim al-Janabi, a 14-year-old Iraqi girl who was raped that year before she and her family were killed. Five current or former

U.S. soldiers went to prison, one for a life term, for their roles in that attack.

He also shouted out "Nidal Hasan Fort Hood 2009." Hasan, an Army major and psychiatrist, is charged in the 2009 deaths of 13 people at Fort Hood in the worst mass shooting ever on a U.S. military installation.

Abdo's court-appointed attorney did not comment. His next hearing was set for Aug. 4.

According to court documents, Abdo told investigators he planned to construct two bombs in his motel room using gunpowder and shrapnel packed into pressure cookers and then detonate the explosives at a restaurant frequented by soldiers. FBI Agent James E. Runkel said in an affidavit filed in federal court that police found Abdo carrying a backpack containing two clocks, wire, ammunition, a handgun and the "Make a bomb in the kitchen of your Mom" article. □

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Jeffs threatens court with Biblical repercussions



Warren Jeffs, left, leader of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, is led into the Tom Green County Courthouse, Friday, July 29, 2011, in San Angelo, Texas. Jeffs fired his defense attorneys Thursday morning and will defend himself in his sexual assault trial.

(AP Photo/San Angelo Standard-Times, Patrick Dove)

WILL WEISSERT
Associated Press

SAN ANGELO, Texas (AP) —

A polygamist sect leader defending himself against sexual assault charges broke his silence Friday with a 55-minute sermon defending plural marriages as divine and later said God would visit "sickness and death" on those involved if his trial wasn't immediately stopped. Warren Jeffs, 55, could face life in prison if he's convicted of sexually assaulting two underage girls. He has been representing himself since he fired his high-powered lawyers Thursday, but he made no opening statement and spent hours sitting alone at the defense table staring into space in silence while prosecutors made their case. On Friday, however, the ecclesiastical head of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints suddenly cried "I object!" as FBI agent John Broadway testified about seizing eight desktop computers and 120 boxes and large folders of documents from the church's remote compound in West Texas in 2008. "There is sacred trust given to religious leadership not to be touched by

government agencies," said Jeffs, who leads an offshoot of mainstream Mormonism that believes polygamy brings exaltation in heaven. The sect's 10,000 members see Jeffs as a prophet who speaks for God on Earth.

Jeffs then launched into a lengthy defense of polygamy, but Walther eventually overruled his objection. She said court rules prohibited him from testifying while objecting but she let him go on at length because he hadn't offered an opening statement.

Jeffs then said he had no choice but to read a statement from God. Walther dismissed the jury and allowed him to read it.

"I, the Lord God of heaven," Jeffs read, "call upon the court to cease this open prosecution against my pure, holy way."

If the trial continues, the statement said, "I will send a scourge upon the counties of prosecutorial zeal to make humbled by sickness and death."

Jeffs has frequently said the charges against him are the work of over-zealous prosecutors. Walther responded to the statement by telling Jeffs he could not

threaten the jury.

"If you call for their destruction," she said, "or in any way say that they will be injured or damaged because of their service, you will be removed from the courtroom."

During afternoon testimony from Broadway and other witnesses who detailed documents seized from the FLDS compound, Jeffs objected so much that Walther eventually had a bailiff remove his microphones.

It was a sharp contrast to his earlier silence and halting speech. When answering questions from Walther earlier in the week, Jeffs usually paused for a full minute or two and then spoke in slow, deliberate tones interrupted by long, awkward pauses. But his words flowed freely Friday. Jeffs, who is scheduled for trial on bigamy charges in October, said his church has practiced polygamy for five generations and believes it is the will of God, who is a higher power than courts, state legislatures and the U.S. Congress.

"We are not a fly-by-night religious society . . . We are a community of faith and principles and those principles are so sacred. □



North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan briefs the media following a meeting at the Ronald H. Brown U.S. Mission to the United Nations on Friday, July 29, 2011 in New York. The United States is hoping North Korea is willing to abandon its nuclear weapons in exchange for better relations during a second day of talks.

(AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews)

Talks between US, North Korea end

ANITA SNOW
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The

United States said Friday it will consult with South Korea and other countries involved in formal talks to end North Korea's nuclear arms program after wrapping up two days of exploratory discussions with diplomats from the North.

North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan emerged from Friday's meeting characterizing the discussions as positive and expressing hope for continued talks. "We continue to maintain contacts," Kim said.

But U.S. Ambassador Stephen Bosworth, the Obama administration's top envoy on North Korean affairs, said before deciding on any next steps, "the United States will consult closely with the Republic of Korea and other partners in the six-party talks."

The United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia have been negotiating since 2003 with Pyongyang to persuade North Korea to dismantle its nuclear weapons programs. Pyongyang pulled out of

the six-party talks in April 2009 after being censured for launching a long-range missile, and it vowed never to return. Diplomats at the South Korean mission to the U.N. could not immediately be reached for comment late Friday afternoon.

This week's high-level meetings have raised hopes of a breakthrough in resuming the disarmament negotiations. Both sides used the same phrase, "constructive and businesslike," to describe the mood of the meetings Thursday and Friday at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations. But neither side indicated if the talks had in any way satisfied American hopes of gauging whether the North is willing to exchange its atomic weapons program for better relations with the U.S. and its neighbors.

Some analysts are skeptical about whether the North would give up its nuclear program, especially since it conducted a second nuclear test and revealed a uranium enrichment facility that could give it another way to make nuclear bombs since the last formal six-party talks in 2008. □

Alexander McQueen's final showstopper

ERIC WILSON

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NEW YORK — There was a reason Alexander McQueen, who committed suicide last year at the age of 40, was considered one of the greatest fashion designers of his generation, admired by his peers for his astounding technical ability and idolized by students for his near-fearless risk-taking. "People don't want to see clothes," he once said. "They want to see something that fuels the imagination." But while he was revered in fashion, and his runway shows were among the most closely watched, almost no one could have imagined that, as the subject of a museum exhibition, McQueen would prove to be almost as pop-

ular as Pablo Picasso and Vincent van Gogh. At some point this weekend or thereabouts, and with still a week to go in its three-month run, the wildly popular McQueen retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, based on its current trajectory, will set an attendance record for a fashion exhibition there when it surpasses the 576,000 visitors of Friday morning, 553,000 people had seen the show, including quite a few who would have professed that they cared not a thing about fashion. "You take a medium like fashion that you don't think is going to have that much depth, and then you find that it does," said Edward Murguia, 67, a sociology professor at Texas A&M



Visitors crowd into a room at the "Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty," exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York, July 27, 2011. By the time the exhibit closes Aug. 7, it will, in all likelihood, wind up ranking among the museum's 20 most popular exhibitions.

(Josh Haner/The New York Times)



Visitors in line to view the "Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty," exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York, July 27, 2011.

(Josh Haner/The New York Times)

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University, as he exited the show on a recent afternoon. His wife had dragged him along, he said. "You

can just see people walk by saying, this is great art, and they are fascinated by this," he said. "I could never

imagine how much he got done in such a short life. It's just amazing to look at the level of detail." □



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Weezer and Flaming Lips, an experimental mix

BEN RATLIFF

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HOLMDEL, N.J. — Weezer, established in 1992, and the Flaming Lips, established in 1983, have both had multiple-act, hill-and-dale careers in what used to be called alternative rock. Presumably, so have their listeners, some of whom are closing in on 50. But they don't have much else in common, and that's partly why their collaboration on Thursday at PNC Bank Arts Center here — repeated on Friday at Jones Beach — felt like a bright idea. It was less a double bill than a relay or a revolving door. Each band played a few songs and then made way for the other; both groups performed together, drum sets adjacent in the backline, at the beginning and end.

Cuomo, the geeky major-domo of Weezer, has grown famous on twitchy, distorted power-pop with strong melodic lines. If his songs were people, they'd be around 16, smart, self-absorbed and a little nasty; they would not like the taste of beer. Wayne Coyne, the relaxed, glad-handing singer and songwriter of the Flaming Lips, writes spaced-out, psych-



From left: drummer Pat Wilson, guitarist Brian Bell and lead singer Rivers Cuomo of Weezer, lead singer Wayne Coyne of the Flaming Lips and bassist Scott Shriner of Weezer onstage at a concert at the PNC Bank Arts Center, in Holmdel, N.J., July 28, 2011. Each band played a few songs and then made way for the other; both groups performed together, drum sets adjacent in the backline, at the beginning and end.

(Tom White/The New York Times)

delic singalongs. His songs might be around 21, kind of looking for an internship and very interested in who they were at 5. They have just dropped acid and want to talk to you. The show frontloaded so much action that you worried it might not maintain its pace. First the bands threw in together on a version of Black Sabbath's "Sweet Leaf" — messy, functional — while Coyne and Cuomo walked over the crowd inside giant inflatable bubbles, a standard part of the Flaming Lips festival shows, but a first for Cuomo, who looked giddy and panicky

in there. The Flaming Lips followed with "Worm Mountain" and brought out their guns: confetti, oversize balloons, a megaphone blowing orange smoke.

By contrast, Weezer didn't give you much to look at and made your hearing focus on a tiny dot: you trained it on the physics of chorus-into-bridge, on sud-

Coyne, as usual, played the ringleader, with a side interest in distressed folk song. A fine vocalist he is not, and his songs lose their flavor quickly, but the band knows what it's up to: it spreads out the audiovisual experience, generalizing it, so that there's no particular pressure on any one part. The drumming is as important as the dry ice; the lyrics are as important as Coyne's proprietary ambles around the stage.

den dynamic shifts, on Cuomo's deliberate changing of accent in his singing, usually to serve the song at particular moments. (He has an East Coast voice and a West Coast voice, a recessive voice and a thuggish voice; in a song from the band's first album, "Only in Dreams," he came down hard on the key word and pronounced it as "draims," which was precisely the right thing to do.) □



Rivers Cuomo, the lead singer of Weezer, onstage at a concert with Flaming Lips, at the PNC Bank Arts Center, in Holmdel, N.J., July 28, 2011.

(Tom White/The New York Times)

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Lofty aims but stalled enforcement of title IX equity law

KATIE THOMAS

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In 1998, the University of Southern California was accused of denying its female students a fair chance to participate in sports. Thirteen years later, the federal agency charged with investigating sex discrimination in schools has not completed its inquiry of USC.

In 2008, the same federal agency, the Office for Civil Rights, came across evidence that Ball State University in Indiana was losing a disproportionate number of coaches of its women's teams. But the agency opted to let Ball State investigate itself. After a two-week inquiry, during which Ball State failed to interview a single coach, the university concluded that there was no evidence that any of the coaches had been unfairly treated or let go.

The federal law known as Title IX – requiring schools at all levels to offer girls and women equal access to athletics – has produced a wealth of progress since it was enacted almost four decades ago. Almost no one disputes that.

But scores of schools, year in and year out, still fail to abide by the law. For those schools, almost no one disputes this: There is little chance their shortcomings will ever be investigated, and even if they are, few will be meaningfully punished.

According to a review by The New York Times, the Office for Civil Rights allows cases of suspected discrimination to drag on for years, long after the affected athletes have graduated.

The office – whose staff of 600 full-time employees at its Washington headquarters and 12 regional offices

must juggle a variety of cases including those for disability, age and race dis-

own plans for fixing problems. Not surprisingly, the process can lead to further

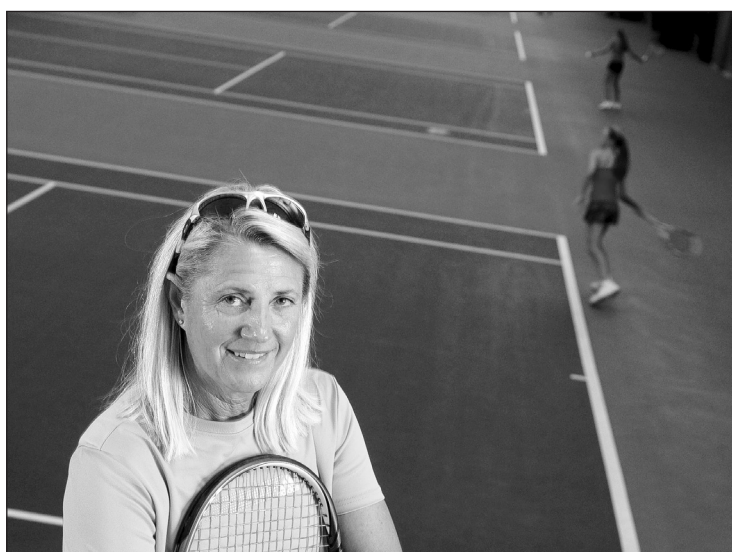
enforce the law: Any school that is found to be violating Title IX risks losing its federal funds. But that punishment has never been used since Congress passed the law in 1972. And the office cannot cite any instance in which a case of suspected discrimination against female athletes was referred to the justice department for additional action.

endures and that enforcement has frequently been lax or delayed.

"Some progress," she said, "is not enough progress when it comes to ensuring that this country protects students from discrimination."

Ali, who was appointed by President Barack Obama in 2009, said her office had become more aggressive over the past two years, initiating more investigations and taking on some of the biggest, most successful athletic programs in the country. The office, for example, has recently opened investigations of Louisiana State University and Butler University, whose men's basketball team has reached the national title game the past two seasons.

She said "institutions that folks may have perceived as being off-limits" would be looked at and held accountable. "Nobody gets a free pass," she said. □



Kathy Bull, a former tennis coach at Ball State University who sued the school for allegedly violating the federal law known as Title IX, requiring schools at all levels across the country to offer girls and women equal access to athletics, in Kalamazoo, Mich., July 28, 2011. While a college or university in violation of Title IX risks losing its federal funding, that penalty has never once been used, and there are no examples of cases being referred to the justice department.

(Erik Holladay/The New York Times)

crimination – routinely asks schools to investigate themselves and to develop their

delays and little change. The Office for Civil Rights certainly has the power to

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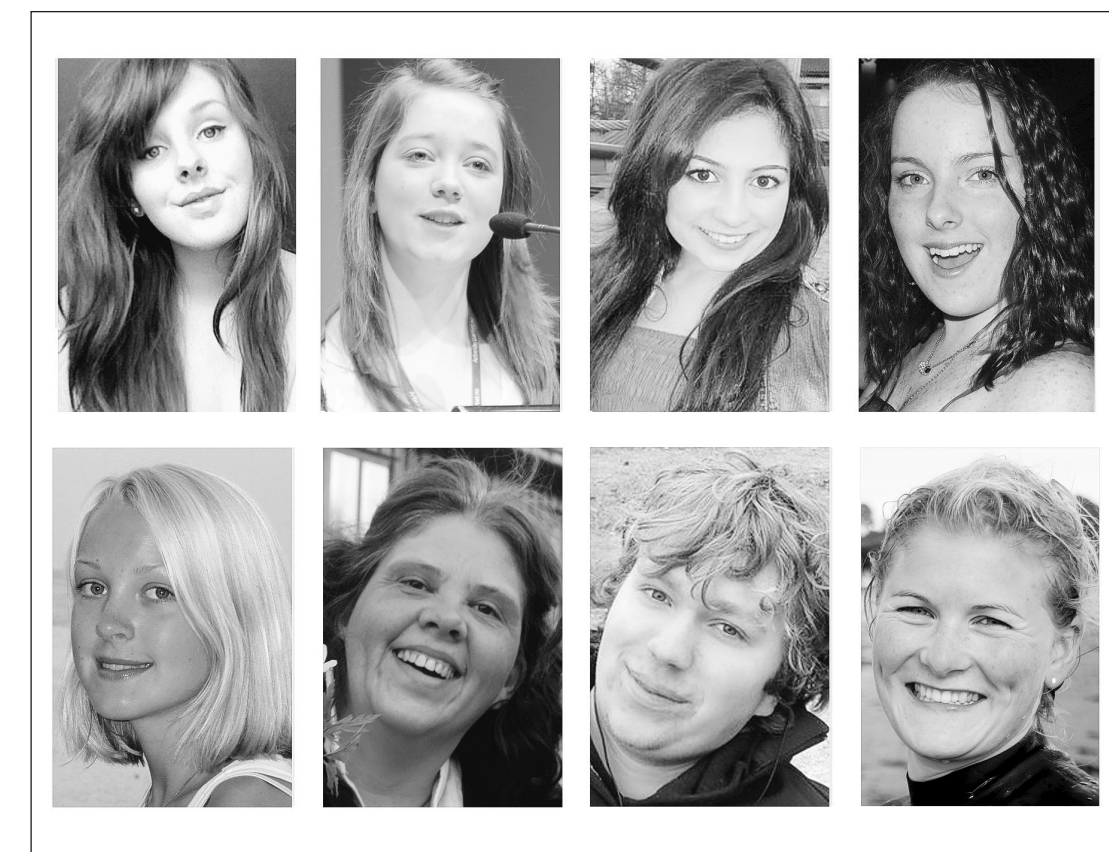
A week later, Norway mourns 77 victims of massacre

BJOERN H. AMLAND
IAN MacDOUGALL

Associated Press

OSLO, Norway (AP) — Norway began burying the dead on Friday, a week after an anti-Muslim extremist killed 77 people in a bombing and shooting rampage. Mourners of all ages vowed they would not let the massacre threaten their nation's openness and democracy. An 18-year-old Muslim girl was the first victim to be laid to rest since the gunman opened fire at a political youth camp and bombed the government headquarters in Oslo. After a funeral service in the Nesodden church outside the capital, Bano Rashid, a Kurdish immigrant from Iraq, was buried in a Muslim rite. Sobbing youth accompanied her coffin, which was draped in a Kurdish flag. The attack will "not destroy Norway's commitment to democracy, tolerance and fighting racism," Labor Party youth-wing leader Eskil Pedersen said at a memorial service in Oslo.

Pedersen, who was on the island retreat of Utoya when the gunman's attack began, said: "Long before he stands before a court we can say: he has lost." Pedersen said the youth organization would return to Utoya next year for its annual summer gathering, a tradition that stretches back decades. Police raised the death toll to 77, from 76, and said all those



This photo combo shows victims who were killed in the July 22, 2011 terror attacks in Oslo and on Utoya island in Norway. Top, from left, Synne Roeyneland, 18, from Oslo, Norway, Hanne Kristin Fridtun, 17, from Trondheim Norway, Gizem Dogan, 17, from Trondheim Norway, Silje Stamneshagen, 18, from Askoe, Norway. Bottom, from left, Margrethe Boeyum Kloeve, 16, from Baerum, Norway, Hanne Fjalestad, 43, from Lunner, Norway, Sondre Furseth Dale, 17, from Haugesund Norway, Kjersti Berg Sand, 26, from Nord-Oda Norway.

(AP Photo/File)

killed in the July 22 terror attacks in Oslo and on Utoya have now been identified and those reported missing have been accounted for. Norway's Police Security Service said the threat from right-wing extremists remains unchanged after Anders Behring Breivik's attack. It said the 32-year-old Norwegian's actions lack parallels in Europe or elsewhere, his views differ from the ideology of most racist and neo-Nazi groups, and

very few people in Norway are capable of replicating what he did. Since the massacre, questions have persisted about whether authorities had underestimated extremist dangers in Norway. At Friday's memorial service in Oslo at the assembly hall of the "People's House," a community center for Norway's labor movement, Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg said: "Today it is one week since Norway was hit by evil."

The bullets struck dozens of members of the youth faction of his Labor Party, but they were aimed at the entire nation, Stoltenberg said, on a stage adorned with red roses, the symbol of his party. "I think July 22 will be a very strong symbol of the Norwegian people's wish to be united in our fight against violence, and will be a symbol of how the nation can answer with love," he told reporters after the ceremony. Members of

the audience raised bouquets of flowers as each speaker took the stage, and some of them fought back tears as they spoke. Later, Stoltenberg spoke at a Muslim memorial service in Gronland, an immigrant neighborhood in Oslo. The prime minister called for unity across ethnic and religious lines, a message he has repeated many times since the attacks. Breivik, a vehement anti-Muslim, was questioned by police Friday for the second time since surrendering to an anti-terror squad on Utoya, where his victims lay strewn across the shore and in the water. Many were teens who were gunned down as they tried to flee the onslaught. In a 1,500-page manifesto released just before the attacks, Breivik ranted about Europe being overrun by Muslim immigrants and blamed left-wing political forces for making the continent multicultural.

Police attorney Paal-Fredrik Hjord Kraby said the Breivik remained calm and cooperative during the questioning session, in which investigators reviewed with him his statements from an earlier session on Saturday. Investigators believe Breivik acted alone, after years of meticulous planning, and haven't found anything to support his claims that he's part of an anti-Muslim militant network plotting a series of coups d'etat across Europe. □

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Will a chastened Murdoch prove good for News Corp?

BERNARD CONDON
DAVID K. RANDALL
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — For long-suffering shareholders of News Corp., there may be a silver lining in the phone-hacking scandal: A chastened Rupert Murdoch.

A sort of real-life Citizen Kane, the 80-year-old CEO has amassed dozens of newspapers and TV businesses around the world. To politicians and pundits, the power of his media holdings elicits a mix of awe and fear.

But on Wall Street, the response is mostly fear — fear that Murdoch is going to orchestrate another dubious deal that weighs on the company's stock. Indeed, Murdoch's critics say he has focused too much attention on expanding his empire with little regard for Wall Street's chief measure of success: a rising stock price.

The concern is well-founded. His empire building has included several clunker deals — a hefty \$5.6 billion for Dow Jones & Co, for instance — that have hurt News Corp. Including dividends, the company returned just 13 percent to holders of its widely held class A stock the past 10 years.

The safest, most boring securities around — short-term Treasury bills — returned 42 percent.

"If Murdoch were to leave, the first thing that would happen is that the stock would go up," says Donald Yacktman, president of Yacktman Asset Management, a money manager in Austin, Texas, whose 53 million class A shares is its largest holding. He calls Murdoch a "kingdom builder," and suggests the scandal might be a "blessing in disguise" — even if Murdoch doesn't depart — if it dampens his appetite to buy more.

Starting with one newspaper in Australia, Murdoch built News Corp. into a global powerhouse with stakes in media businesses that include broadcast and satellite TV, cable programming, books and films. News Corp. owns the Fox TV network, along with 27 local Fox sta-



Jonathan May-Bowles leaves Westminster Magistrates Court after answering charges of a public order offence in London, Friday, July 29, 2011. May-Bowles is accused of throwing a plate of shaving foam at media tycoon Rupert Murdoch as he gave evidence to a British Parliamentary select committee on July 20.

(AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

"Murdoch has been more focused on growing the size of the company than maximizing returns for the company," says Christopher Marangi, an associate portfolio manager at Gabelli Funds, which owns 5 million class A shares. News Corp. declined to comment for this story. Even before the scandal broke, analysts complained that Murdoch's love of newspapers was dragging down the company. In its last fiscal year, the company's newspapers generated \$530 million in operating profits on \$6.1 billion in revenue. But that was less than a quarter of the \$2.3 billion operating profit generated by News Corp.'s cable network business, which had slightly higher revenue of \$7 billion. □

tions. Its 20th Century Fox studio is behind blockbusters such as Avatar, which brought in a record \$2.78 billion worldwide. In Britain, it has a 39 percent stake in British Sky Broadcasting, the country's biggest commercial TV company. News Corp. also owns 146 newspapers in Australia and three in Britain. In the U.S., it publishes The Wall Street Journal and New York Post and 23 smaller newspapers from Maine to California.

In its fiscal year ended June 2010, the last one for which figures are available, News Corp.'s 52,000 employees generated \$33 billion in revenue. Its net income was \$2.5 billion.

That is both impressive and disappointing. Most investors in News Corp. focus on its 1.8 billion shares of class A stock. Though they've risen 25 percent in the past twelve months on strength of the company's cable network business, they've lagged the broader market and rival media companies for years. News Corp. has a second class of stock, known as B shares, which confer voting rights and are tightly held by select groups. Murdoch and his family control nearly 40 percent of the Class B stock.



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UN imposes sanctions on Pakistani Taliban

EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

The U.N. announced Friday it has added the Pakistani Taliban to its terrorism blacklist, subjecting it to an asset freeze and arms embargo in a move supported by the United States, Britain and the Pakistani government.

Pakistani Taliban militants have declared war against the Pakistani state and its security establishment and have often targeted government officials and security forces in their quest to topple the U.S.-allied government. The group also claimed responsibility for last year's failed car bombing in New York's Times Square. The Security Council committee monitoring sanctions against al-Qaida said it added Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, better known as the Pakistani Taliban or the TTP, to its list of groups subject to an asset freeze and arms embargo. Its top leaders, Hakimullah Mehsud and Wali Ur Rehman, have been on the list since last October and are subject to these sanctions as well as a travel ban.

That means all 193 U.N. member states are required to freeze any assets of the TTP or its leaders, prevent any weapons or ammunition from getting to them, and bar Mehsud and Ur Rehman from entering their countries.

U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice and Britain's U.N. Am-



Taliban No 2 commander Waliur Rehman, centre, flanked by militants, talks to the Associated Press in Shawal area of South Waziristan along the Afghanistan border in Pakistan. The Pakistani Taliban has custody of two kidnapped Swiss tourists, but is willing to free them if the U.S. releases a female Pakistani scientist convicted of trying to kill Americans, Rehman told The Associated Press. The couple's identity has not been disclosed.

(AP Photo/Ishtiaq Mahsud)

bassador Mark Lyall Grant welcomed the committee's action.

"Today's action sends a strong message to those who support and finance terrorism, and reinforces U.S. efforts to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaida," Rice said in a statement.

Lyall Grant noted Pakistan's support, saying it "sends a powerful signal of the international community's solidarity and resolve in the fight against the TTP and international terrorism."

The Pakistani Taliban is a loose federation of tribal and regional factions which maintains strongholds along the country's northwestern tribal belt, where the militants are also believed to be providing safe havens for senior al-

Qaida leaders. Its original leader, Baitullah Mehsud, was killed in an Aug. 5, 2009, CIA missile strike in northwestern Pakistan and was replaced by his military chief, Hakimullah Mehsud.

"In addition to attacks against the people of Pakistan," Rice said, "TTP has carried out several notorious terrorist attacks against United States interests, including a December 2009 attack on a U.S. military base in Afghanistan and an April 2010 bombing against the U.S. Consulate in Peshawar."

Lyall Grant said the Pakistani Taliban "has clear links to al-Qaida at an operational level."

U.N. sanctions "will help to reduce its ability to operate effectively and perpetrate terrorist attacks," he said. □

Top generals quit in group, stunning Turks

GUL TUYSUZ

SABRINA TAVERNISE

© 2011 New York Times

ISTANBUL — Turkey's top military commanders resigned en masse Friday, a move without precedent in Turkish history that many analysts saw as a failed effort by a beleaguered institution to exert what is left of its dwindling political power.

In the surprising series of events, Turkey's top commander, Gen. Isik Kosaner, together with the leaders of the navy, army and air force, simultaneously resigned in protest over the sweeping arrests of dozens of generals over the past year as suspects in conspiracy investigations that many people in Turkey have come to see as a witch hunt. Hours later, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan accepted the resignations and elevated his own choice to become the senior military commander: Gen. Necdet Ozel, who is now commander of the military police. The decision stamped Erdogan's civilian authority on the country's military, which has long regarded itself as a protector of Turkey's secular traditions. The news stunned Turkey and left many people wondering whether they were witnessing the end of the power the military has long exercised over the nation's political system.

"This is effectively the end of the military's role in Turkish democracy," said Asli Aydintasbas, a columnist for the Turkish daily newspaper Milliyet. "This is the symbolic moment where the



Isik Kosaner, top commander of Turkey's military, in an official portrait. Kosaner resigned suddenly on Friday, July 29, 2011, according to the semi-official Anatolian News Agency. Kosaner, sent a letter of resignation to the prime minister's office on Friday, the state-run agency said, without elaborating on his reason.

(TAF via The New York Times)

first Turkish republic ends and the second republic begins." Erdogan has rolled back the military's political power substantially since he took office in 2002, in part through legal reforms that assert civilian control. But the single biggest blow to the military's clout has been a sprawling series of investigations and trials in which a number of senior military commanders, as well as journalists and others, were charged with conspiring to overthrow Erdogan's government.

The resignations were the culmination of a year of frustrations, in which more than 40 generals — approximately a tenth of the senior military command — were taken into custody, an assault that has infuriated the military but left it essentially helpless to fight back. □

NATO leaves Serb roadblock

NEBI QENA

Associated Press

PRISTINA, Kosovo (AP) —

NATO forces in Kosovo withdrew from a barricade put up by hundreds of Serbs on Friday to avoid confrontation with Serb extremists blocking the peacekeepers from reaching a base in the Serb-run north, NATO's commander in Kosovo said. "I had the option to enforce and open up the roadblock," Maj. Gen. Erhard Buehler told reporters minutes after he ordered his troops to pull out. "I decided not to do it because in the meantime so many criminals and extremists and armed people are here.

It would be a nightmare." The NATO spokesman in Kosovo, Capt. Hans Wichter said the decision by the top NATO commander, Maj. Gen. Erhard Buehler, was made "to avoid bloodshed" in the area, which has been rocked by violent incidents since Kosovo police moved to assert authority over minority Serbs that reject Pristina's rule. The protesters applauded and cheered as U.S. and Slovenian peacekeepers turned around on a main road linking Kosovo with Serbia and crossed the Ibar river into the southern part of the areas dominated by ethnic Albanians. Serbs blocked roads on Friday and have attacked border posts, firing at NATO peacekeepers in an attempt to keep control over Kosovo's north, which despite a NATO and EU presence remains under Serbia's realm. Serbia's Kosovo negotiator Borislav Stefanovic, who is discussing the current situation with NATO, praised the decision to withdraw and said that an agreement was also in sight to resolve control over two crossing points between Kosovo and Serbia. □

Bomb hits Syrian pipeline as protests continue

NADA BAKRI

© 2011 New York Times

BEIRUT — The Syrian government said Friday that an oil pipeline had been hit by a bomb in what authorities called a terrorist attack, as the country's uprising continued with the Friday protests that have become a ritual. Security forces killed nine people at the demonstrations, protesters and activists said. Security forces also killed at least seven people in overnight raids in towns near the Iraqi border, activists said. Government forces had stayed out of the towns for weeks, fearing that an assault would ignite tribal tensions.

The attack on the pipeline could cause new troubles for Syria's economy. Oil revenue has become increasingly important as tourism has fallen off during months of upheaval. A report on Syrian television said the pipeline was near the town of Tal Kalakh as well as the Tal Hosh dam. The explosion left a 33-foot-deep crater.

The report also said that Friday's "attack sought to cause oil to leak into the dam's waters in order to damage agricultural crops in the area." The report did not mention casualties or what kind of damage the explosion caused. Numeir Makhlof, chairman of the state-owned Syrian Company for Oil Transport, told the state-run SANA news agency that oil had leaked into a lake that supplies the vast agricultural western area with irrigation water.

Tal Kalakh was the site of a fierce military operation in May that followed large anti-government demonstrations. At least 35 people died, activists and residents said.

The bombing was the second to single out an oil pipeline since the popular uprising against President Bashar Assad began in mid-March. The pipeline that was hit Friday carries crude from fields in the oil-rich eastern town of Deir el-Zour to a refinery in Baniyas, the main point of export for Syrian oil. The protests Friday started af-

tions. That includes minorities and the business elite in Damascus and Syria's other largest city, Aleppo. The protests came just days before Ramadan. Activists have promised to escalate their campaign during the holy month, hoping to gather people each night after evening prayers at mosques. The Local Coordination Committees, an

tral city of Homs and one in Latakia, along the northern coast. The raids near the Iraqi border were in Deir el-Zour and Alboukamal, towns where large demonstrations have been held in recent weeks. Nawaf al-Bashir, an activist from Deir el-Zour, said security forces opened fire at protesters who were setting up roadblocks to prevent them



In this photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, workers pump oil from the site of a bomb blast that struck a major oil pipeline in the western town of Talkalakh, Syria, Friday, July 29, 2011. Syrian state television described the blast as a "terrorist" attack, saying that a group of "saboteurs" was behind the explosion. It was the second incident involving an oil pipeline in a month, and the second time this week that authorities accuse "saboteurs" of striking installations. (AP Photo/SANA)

ter noon prayers and were dubbed "Your silence is killing us," in the hopes of attracting sections of the Syrian population yet to take part in demonstra-

umbrella group that helps organize and document protests, said four protesters died in Deir el-Zour, three in the southern town of Daraa, one in the cen-

from entering the town to carry out arrests. Al-Bashir said at least 60 people had been arrested since Thursday evening and that 30 soldiers had defected. □

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Self-publishing options grow, easing challenge to entry

ALINA TUGEND

© 2011 New York Times

I'm a snob. Oh, I don't particularly care what kind of car you drive or if you wear the latest designer fashions, but until recently I turned up my nose at authors who published their own books. It smacked of self-indulgence and vanity (as in that old term "vanity press"). But as one friend and then another chose to pay to publish their own books — people I admire and respect — and as the author Amanda Hocking became the superstar example of successful self-publishing, I realized I had been too hasty.

The phenomenon was worth a second look.

And one of the first things I learned about the self-publishing business was that there was a reason the subject of many self-published books was — yes — how to self-publish, because it's not easy to understand all the ins and outs.

"As with many things in life, there are often hidden fees," said Lorraine Shanley, president of Market Partners International, a publishing consulting firm. And many options. First, you can choose to publish your book as a print edition, e-book or both. With print editions, the most common system now is called "print on demand." That means you don't actually have the book printed until someone buys it. That's unlike the old days, say 15 years ago, when if you published your own book, you had to commit to buying hundreds or thousands of copies.

The advent of digital printing means it makes economic sense to print one copy at a time, said Kevin Weiss, president and chief executive of Author Solutions, which owns numerous self-publishing companies, including iUniverse, AuthorHouse and Xlibris.

"Before, you had to fill your garage with books and pass them on to all your best friends," Weiss said. Self-publishing is obviously taking off, but statistics on new titles are almost impos-

sible to come by because so many books counted as part of "nontraditional" publishing include reprints of old books that are now in the public domain.

But Weiss said his company was on track to publish 26,000 new books this year, compared with 13,000 four years ago. CreateSpace, the self-publishing arm of Amazon.com, doesn't release numbers, but a spokeswoman, Brittany Turner, told me in an email that its books increased 80 percent from 2009 to 2010. There are many reasons potential authors want to publish their own books, Weiss said. They have an idea or manuscript they have passed around to various agents and publishers with no luck; they may just want to print a few copies

Then there's choosing the right company. If you're technologically comfortable, Lulu.com or CreateSpace may be good options. CreateSpace, for example, doesn't charge upfront fees, but you'll pay if you want additional services like copy editing and design layout. And it costs \$5 to \$10 for the printed proof.

On the other hand, iUniverse and AuthorHouse offer what Weiss called "assisted self-publishing." But the price of that assistance can range widely, starting as low as \$400 and going as high as \$15,000.

For the lower end, you get help in creating a cover and getting a copyright and ISBN number (the numeric book identifier). You'll also get one paperback

and 50 hardback copies of your book.

Like many authors, Susan G. Bell, who lives in Larchmont, N.Y., had mixed experiences publishing her own book. A former Morgan managing director at JPMorgan Chase, who went back to school to get her Master of Fine Arts at Sarah Lawrence College, she told me she had submitted her book, "When the Getting Was Good," to about 20 agents. Despite receiving some positive feedback, there were no bites.

A few years ago, after hearing that a Sarah Lawrence classmate had self-published a memoir, she decided to check out that route.

"I just wanted to get on with it," Bell said. "I was ready." Following her classmate's

For the cover design, she chose several she liked from novels she had read and contacted the designer of one of them through the designer's website. To her surprise, she was able to commission one for \$2,000. Bell is not sorry she went the self-publishing route, but like so many authors (and yes, even those who are traditionally published) she found book promotion much tougher than she thought it would be.

"What I didn't realize was how difficult it would be to get a review for a self-published book," she said. "And it's hard to sell books without reviews."

Nonetheless, Bell has sold about 700 books through the first quarter of this year, and that is better than most: Industry experts say the average self-published book sells fewer — often far fewer — than 150 copies.

And after all this, can you make money by self-publishing?

"You have to know what services you're buying, who retains the rights, and realize that getting a book published is not the same as getting it marketed," Shanley said. "One size doesn't fit all."



Susan Bell, author of the self-published book "When the Getting Was Good," at her home in Larchmont, N.Y., July 28, 2011. A wide range of options exists for authors who choose to forgo traditional book publishing.

(Marilynn K. Yee/The New York Times)

of, say, a memoir for family members; they want to use it in their business as a type of calling card; or they actually want to sell a lot of books and make a living as writers.

"You have to know what services you're buying, who retains the rights, and realize that getting a book published is not the same as getting it marketed," Shanley said. "One size doesn't fit all."

copy of your finished book, as well as an e-book distributed on all platforms, including the Kindle and the Nook. The book will also be sold through Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

For \$15,000, you get content editing and copy editing, indexing, citations and footnoting, and promotions like book trailers, placement in Google searches and other goodies. And you receive 150 paperback

lead, she chose AuthorHouse and bought one of the lower-cost packages. □

It took about a year from the decision to self-publish to the day she held a copy of the book in her hand. She spent some time learning the ropes: setting up a website, figuring out social media, getting blurbs for the book, arranging a good author photo and finding someone to design the cover.

How much you receive per book varies widely depending on who publishes it and who sells it. For print books, the royalty can run as little as \$1 to \$3 a book, although you can get much more if you sell from your own website or if you publish it as an e-book.

For e-books that sell for \$2.99 to \$9.99 on Kindle, for example, authors can earn a 70 percent royalty, and e-books priced outside that range earn authors a 35 percent royalty, according to Turner, the Amazon spokeswoman.

Potential authors have to be realistic about what they can expect when self-publishing, Shanley said. But that should not necessarily deter them from doing it. □

LOCAL Aruba TODAY

The Best of Aruba to be showcased on Discovery Channel



Caribbean Travel + Life film crew reviewing edits.



Screaming Eagle Owner Sven Schneider taking pictures.

EAGLE BEACH - Caribbean Travel + Life magazine recently launched a television series that airs weekly on the Discovery Channel. This week, producers and two film crews have been scouring the island and

filming the best of the best of Aruba. The Aruba Tourism Authority together with The Aruba Marriott Resort, the Hyatt Regency Aruba, and the Radisson Aruba Resort made this possible with sponsorship. The Best of Aruba is hosted by Ramona Bruland, who will take viewers on a journey around the island to the most spectacular restaurants, best shopping, and outrageous activities. The beautiful Aussie is well known in the USA and around the world for covering events and the popular lifestyle, outdoor activities, arts, culture, gear, fashions, food and wine. Not only



Screaming Eagle Owner Marcel Van Berkum is pictured with Host Ramona Bruland.

does Ramona enjoy the island and sample fabulous cuisine, she dives into the watersports scene and actually goes kiteboarding. "The Best of Aruba will be the best show of the season," stated Guy Britton, Caribbean Travel + Life publisher who was on location this week on Aruba. Discovery Channel is currently the most widely distributed cable network in the United States, reaching more than 92 million households, part of its global audience of 431 million homes in 170 countries and territories. Versions of the channel are seen in Latin America, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Japan, Taiwan, India, Malaysia and other countries. □



Producers Jeff Hymes and Jamie Smith dig into a dozen delicious Dutch oysters at the Flying Fishbone restaurant in Savaneta.



Film crew hard at work standing in the water at the Flying Fishbone in order to get the best shot.



Caribbean Travel + Life Publisher Guy Britton is pictured with his wife Erin at the Flying Fishbone in Savaneta.



Show Host Ramona Bruland is pictured with Aruba Tourism Authority Representative Paula Ochoa.

Screaming Eagle of a time for Alwin



EAGLE BEACH - On Wednesday evening, Alwin Lin celebrated his birthday in style his partner Jacqueline Suttle at the fabulous Screaming Eagle Restaurant. They had a wonderful dining experience in the unique atmosphere of this exotic restaurant on Eagle Beach. □



The Best of Aruba went fine dining at the Screaming Eagle.

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Aruhiba, The 1 and Only Homemade Aruban Cigar



ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is



specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba". Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars.

The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open from Monday to Saturday from 9am till

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At the Palm Beach Plaza Mall Successful start for the Mega Domino Tournament



PALM BEACH – D.D. Brakes, among the competing Friendly, Biba Lekker local domino teams on and Red Stones, were Wednesday, as the Mega

Domino Tournament was launched scheduled to unfold for six Wednesdays hence after, at the food court of the Palm Beach Plaza Mall.

Roy Quandus was proud to introduce the island's best Domino players which will be competing during a six week event for a tremendous trophy sponsored by the Aruba Trading Company and Level 5 Scotch Whiskey.

Domino which is played with great passion on the island of Aruba, is considered the national game on many Caribbean islands and Latin American countries.

Every Wednesday for the next 6 weeks, expect to



find heated competitions at the food court.

The outlets of the food court will be offering attractive specials that day, and spectators and players can have a great time, either playing or watching the

games.

The food court at the Palm Beach Plaza Mall boasts large open air seating and a number of delicious outlets offering regional and international specialties on the mall's third floor. □

A bonanza of prizes won at the Casino at the Radisson

PALM BEACH -- The Casino at the Radisson enjoyed an exceptional week in which patrons collected more than \$ 11,000 in slot machine jackpots in addition to a slew of prizes awarded to casino slot and table players at the end of the Suzuki Swift car give-away promotion. On the 9th week of the popular car promotion, the casino conducted the last raffle



before the grand prize in which Darlene Henriquez won a digital camera and Carl Henriquez and Xaibeth Croes were awarded dinner gift certificates to the resort's eateries, one for Laguna Restaurant the other for Gilligan's Beach Bar & Grill.

The exciting slot tournament played out on Saturday, with three local players laying claim to cash prizes among them Maria Quevedo, Liesje Kock and Elisabeth Nicholls. The weekly poker tournament awarded three equal cash prizes of \$ 1,201 to lucky winners Ali Wajdi, F.F. Arts and Susan Kelly.

For the exciting final give away of the Suzuki Swift GLX Sport, on Saturday, Cedric Croes was awarded a new set of keys for his just-won ride, with a Weekend Stay at The Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa going to Juana Reyes, a Digital Camera to Alfred Leonard Herrera, Larimar Spa Massages for two to Cedric Croes, Dinner for two at Laguna Restaurant to Joyce Boekhoudt, Dinner for two at Laguna Restaurant to Ruth Maria Maduro, Dinner for two at Gilligan's Restaurant to Nicholas Saponara a guest of Playa Linda and Breakfast for two at Laguna Restaurant to Shirley de Windt.

Pictured here some of the happy winning faces!! □

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At the Westin Resort & Casino,

Aruba Sunset nuptials for Renzo and Sandra

PALM BEACH -- On Friday, July 22nd, the Westin Resort & Casino, Aruba hosted the wedding ceremony and reception of Renzo Escalante and his bride, Sandra Betancourt. The dream toes-in-the-sand ceremony was held on the shores of the resort on Palm Beach, and was attended by some 50 family and friends who traveled



to Aruba from all over the United States to share in this special time with Renzo and Sandra. Also in attendance were 20 of the couple's local friends, as Renzo and Sandra, who are from Florida, now make Aruba their home. Of the many dynamic venues available at the resort, the couple opted for the resort's Starwood Art Gallery. The gallery, which showcases tal-

ented local artists, provided an intimate setting for a buffet dinner prepared by the Westin's culinary team, with dancing into the wee hours following dinner. Renzo and Sandra's guests that travelled to the island enjoyed numerous activities arranged for them by the couple, and left with beautiful memories of One Happy Island, and one happy couple! ☐

U.S. hires Klinsmann to coach men's national team

In this March 7, 2009 file photo, Bayern Munich head coach Juergen Klinsmann reacts after his team scored during a German first division Bundesliga soccer match against Hanover 96 in Munich, southern Germany. U.S. Soccer moved quickly to name a replacement for fired coach Bob Bradley, announcing Klinsmann's hiring Friday, July 29, 2011.

Associated Press Page 20



SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



U.S. Ryan Lochte shows a v-sign as he leaves the pool after winning the men's 200m Backstroke final at the FINA Swimming World Championships in Shanghai, China, Friday, July 29, 2011.

Associated Press

Lochte wins 3rd and 4th golds at swim worlds

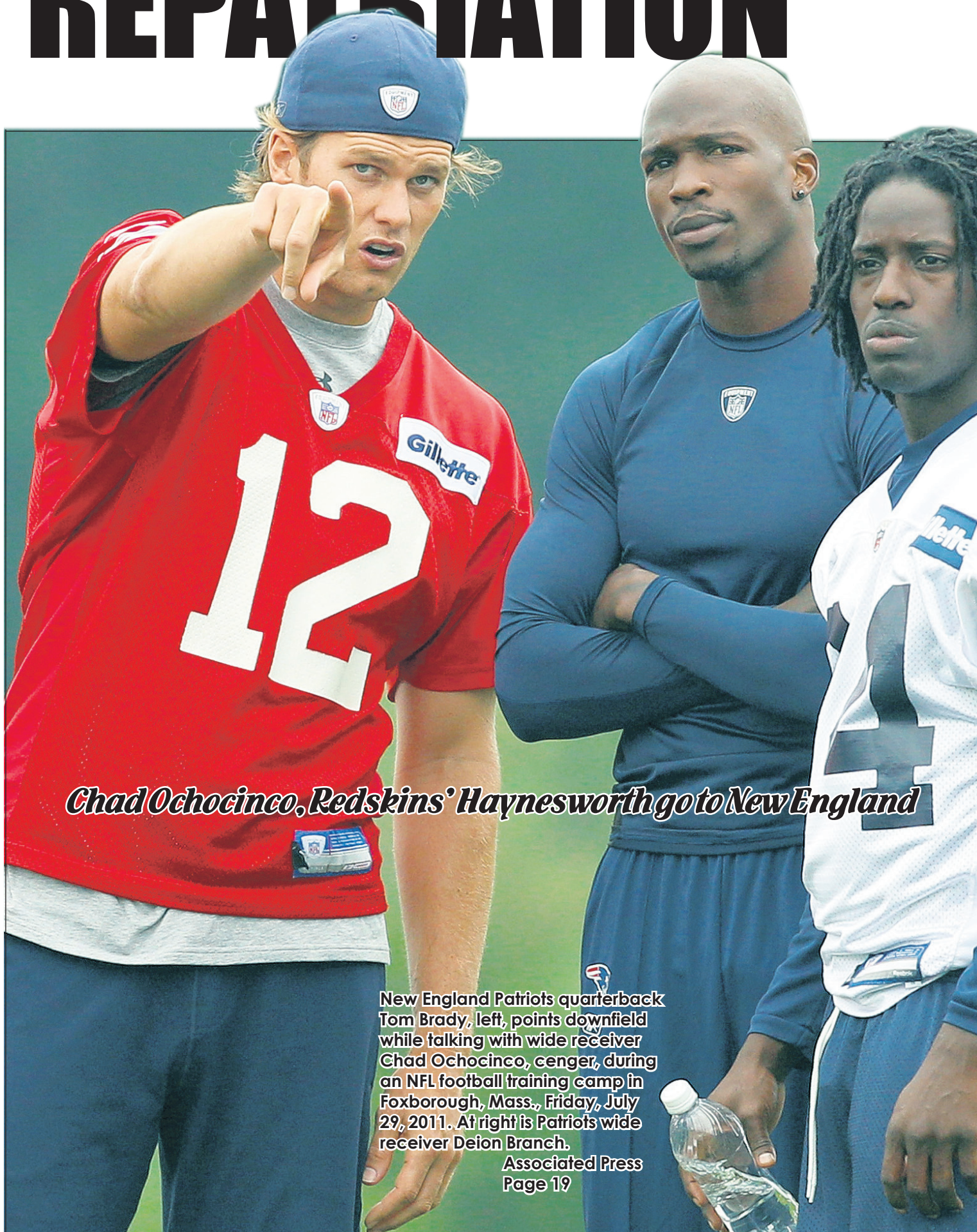
ANDREW DAMPF
AP Sports Writer
SHANGHAI (AP) —

Ryan Lochte locked up two more gold medals at the swimming world championships Friday, raising his victory total to four with at least one more event to go. The American led from start to finish in the 200-meter backstroke, then rallied the U.S. past France in the anchor leg to win the 4x200 freestyle relay.

"When Ryan is hot right now you don't want anyone else on the end of the relay," said Ricky Berens, who swam the third leg for the Americans.

Continued on Page 21

REPATRIATION



Chad Ochocinco, Redskins' Haynesworth go to New England

New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady, left, points downfield while talking with wide receiver Chad Ochocinco, center, during an NFL football training camp in Foxborough, Mass., Friday, July 29, 2011. At right is Patriots wide receiver Deion Branch.

Associated Press
Page 19

Thierry Henry: Salary cap keeps MLS behind Europe

STUART CONDIE

AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — Thierry Henry says Major League Soccer will not attract players from Europe while they are at the peak of their careers as long as teams are forced to operate under a salary cap.

The former France striker joined New York Red Bulls last year from Barcelona but, like David Beckham, only switched to the United States when he was well into his 30s as a so-called Designated Player.

Clubs can sign three DPs on top of the salary cap, a situation the former Arsenal and Barcelona player said puts MLS sides at a disadvantage. Henry said the imposition on MLS franchises is akin to telling European champion Barcelona that it would have to sell one of its Spanish World Cup winners before it could sign FIFA world player of the



New York Red Bulls player Thierry Henry is seen during a press conference at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium in London, Friday, July 29, 2011. The Emirates Cup soccer competition will take place at the Emirates Stadium this weekend.

Associated Press

year Lionel Messi.

"How are you going to say to Barcelona, 'if you get

Messi, you've got to let (Andres) Iniesta go?" Henry asked. "That's how it is in

the U.S. That would never work in Europe."

The salary cap encourages

teams to develop their own local talent — which may eventually make the U.S. national team a contender for honors — but Henry said top international stars at the peak of their powers will never abandon the riches on offer in the English Premier League and Spain's La Liga.

"That can only happen if they stop that three DP thing and stop that salary cap," Henry said. "If one day they're willing to stop the salary cap and not having more than three DPs, then I can see it happening." But the 33-year-old Henry is enthusiastic about the atmosphere and standard of play in North America.

And after the furor around Europe that followed his handball assist for a goal that helped propel France to the World Cup ahead of Ireland, Henry said he is enjoying his relative anonymity. □

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Opening hours: every day, but Tuesdays from 5pm till 10:30pm. □



Big-name moves in flurry of NFL trades

HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Pro Football Writer

The New England Patriots acquired Albert Haynesworth and Chad Ochocinco in a couple of big moves on Thursday among a flurry of trades by NFL teams seeking to make up for time lost in the labor lockout.

Reggie Bush moved from New Orleans to Miami and the Kevin Kolb saga ended as expected, with a trade from Philadelphia to Arizona.

Day 3 of the compressed, post-lockout offseason also included more contract agreements and plenty of cuts, which teams were finally allowed to start announcing.

Among the players getting released were Vince Young by Tennessee, Nate Clements by San Francisco, and Jake Delhomme by Cleveland.

In the first dramatic example of how the new labor deal's rookie salary system will affect elite players, No. 2 overall draft pick Von Miller got \$21 million guaranteed over four years from Denver. The No. 2 pick in 2010, Detroit defensive lineman Ndamukong Suh, signed a five-year deal worth \$40 million guaranteed and as much as \$68 million overall. The man widely regarded as the best available player in free agency, Nnamdi Asomugha, was yet to pick a team. But another top cornerback, Johnathan Joseph, agreed to terms with Houston, according to a person with knowledge of the deal, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the signing hadn't been announced.

New England coach Bob Belichick has had success reining in outspoken players such as receiver Randy Moss, and now the Patriots boss gets two more guys who fit that description in defensive tackle Haynesworth and receiver Ochocinco.

All the Patriots gave up for Haynesworth was a 2013 fifth-round pick. By shipping the defensive tackle to New England, Washington rid itself of a two-year

distraction and fiasco of a free-agent signing — Haynesworth was guaranteed a then-record \$41 million in the seven-year, \$100 million contract he got in the early hours of free agency in 2009. On the same day, he infamously declared: "You're not going to remember Albert Haynesworth as a bust."

He played in only 20 games for Washington, making 6½ sacks, and was in constant legal trouble away from the field. Last season, he feuded with coach Mike Shanahan and was suspended for the final four games for conduct detrimental to the club.

A person with knowledge of the Ochocinco deal told the AP he agreed to a new three-year contract with New England. It was not known what Cincinnati received in return.

In the Kolb deal, Philadelphia received cornerback Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie and a 2012 second-round draft pick from Arizona, which was in need of a starting quarterback. Kolb had lost the Eagles' No. 1 quarterback job to Michael Vick and wanted a chance to lead a team. Kolb, who turns 27 next month, reportedly will get a \$63 million, five-year contract with Arizona. Rodgers-Cromartie, who went to the Pro Bowl in 2009, will play opposite four-time Pro Bowl cornerback Asante Samuel in Philadelphia, shoring up a pass defense that struggled last season.

Miami finalized the trade for Bush by negotiating a new two-year contract for nearly \$10 million with the running back. New Orleans gets reserve safety Jonathon Amaya in the swap, which also involves an exchange of draft picks.

"Change is never easy but I look forward to building something special in Miami and can't wait to embark on this new journey!" Bush wrote on Twitter.

In other transactions Thursday:

—Linebacker Clint Session left Indianapolis but stayed in the AFC South when he agreed to a five-year deal with Jacksonville.

—Dallas made official nine cuts, many of them leaked previously. Gone are tackle Marc Colombo, guard Leonard Davis, receiver Roy Williams, running back Marion Barber, placekicker Kris Brown, offensive linemen Robert Brewster and Travis Bright, linebacker Kelvin Smith and receiver Troy Bergeron.

—Buffalo agreed to a four-year contract worth about \$15 million with Brad Smith, the versatile receiver-running back-kick returner who was a force in the wildcat formation with the New York Jets.

—In addition to officially releasing quarterback Delhomme, Cleveland terminated the contract of linebacker Eric Alexander and waived tight end Tyson DeVree. □



In this Aug. 12, 2010 file photo, New Orleans Saints' Reggie Bush carries the ball during the first half of an NFL preseason football game against the New England Patriots in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press

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FIBA will clear NBA players to play overseas

BRIAN MAHONEY
AP Basketball Writer

If NBA stars are serious about playing overseas, basketball's governing body says they will be welcomed, as long as they promise to leave once the lockout ends.

FIBA announced Friday it would clear NBA players under contract to play in its leagues during the work stoppage, provided the deals they sign come with opt-out clauses.

In a ruling that paves the way for players to earn a paycheck, FIBA agreed with NBA and players' association officials that players are free to sign anywhere but do so at their own risk of injury.

"As the world governing body for basketball, we strongly hope that the labor dispute will be resolved as soon as possible, and that the NBA season is able to begin as scheduled," secretary general Patrick Baumann said in a statement.

"In view of our role to promote basketball worldwide, we support any

player wishing to play the game, wherever and whenever. We do so while obviously taking the interests, rights and obligations of all parties into account." Playing overseas has emerged as an option for NBA players during a work stoppage that threatens to last months and could even wipe out the entire season. Nets All-Star Deron Williams has a deal with Turkish club Besiktas — which is also courting Kobe Bryant — and most top players said they would consider playing overseas. Union executive director Billy Hunter has endorsed the idea, with players believing it will pressure owners at the bargaining table if they see their players have options elsewhere, and FIBA may have been faced with a legal challenge had it denied the players.

"Our players are gratified by today's announcement by FIBA, although it comes as no surprise," Hunter said in a statement. "We have consistently advised our members that in the event of a lockout they would have the right to be compensated for playing basketball irrespective of whether they were under contract to an NBA team or not. We have encouraged all of our players to pursue such opportunities and will continue to do so." If a player under NBA contract agrees to a deal in a FIBA-affiliated league, he



Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant delivers a speech at the U.S. Consulate Tuesday, July 19, 2011 in Shanghai, China. Bryant is in Shanghai with a group of American students studying in China as official ambassador of the After-School All-Stars, an American non-profit organization that provides comprehensive after-school programs to children in several U.S. cities.

Associated Press

first must be cleared to go by the NBA. The league will allow partial clearance, meaning it must be guaranteed the player returns to his NBA team once a new collective bargaining agreement is reached. FIBA will then give its approval once the player has signed a declaration stating he will do so. There is still plenty of doubt that top players will head to Europe or Asia. All-Star-caliber players may not find enough money to make it worthwhile, and numerous players who have signed overseas have stories of missed or late payments

from their teams there. Also, their NBA teams could void their contracts if they are significantly injured playing in another league. Still, scoring champion Kevin Durant of Oklahoma City said Thursday he was "about 50-50" on the idea, while Carmelo Anthony and Chris Paul both said they would consider China during a promotional tour in Hong Kong this week. FIBA also expressed its pleasure that so many players are willing to play this summer despite the risks. Argentina Basketball Federation president German Vaccaro told FIBA.com that it had

secured insurance Thursday, allowing Manu Ginobili, Luis Scola and its other top players to take part in the FIBA Americas tournament it is hosting. France and Russia also have lined up arrangements to have their NBA players take part in Europe's qualifying tournament for the 2012 Olympics. "We are delighted to see that, in spite of widespread doubts related to the lockout, national teams competing in this summer's Olympic qualifiers will be able to count on the participation of most of their NBA stars," Baumann said. □



U.S. hires Klinsmann as new national coach

CHICAGO (AP) — Juergen Klinsmann was appointed as the U.S. national team coach on Friday, a day after Bob Bradley was fired. The former Germany coach will be a familiar face to American fans, given that he nearly got the job after the 2006 World Cup and then again last year before Bradley was given what turned out to be a short-lived contract extension to 2014.

The former Germany striker's first game in charge will be a friendly against archrival Mexico in Philadelphia on Aug. 10.

Qualifying for the next 2014 World Cup in Brazil begins next year.

"We are excited to have Juergen as the head coach of our Men's National Team," U.S. Soccer president Sunil Gulati said



In this July 7, 2006 file photo, German head coach Juergen Klinsmann smiles during a new conference after German soccer team training session in Berlin.

Associated Press

in a statement. "He is a highly accomplished player and coach with the experience and knowledge to advance the program.

Juergen has had success in many different areas of the game, and we look forward to the leadership he will provide on and off the

field."

Klinsmann will be formally introduced Monday at a news conference in New York.

"I am proud and honored to be named the head coach of the U.S. Men's National Team," Klinsmann said. "I would like to thank the U.S. Soccer Federation for the opportunity, and I'm excited about the challenge ahead.

I am looking forward to bringing the team together for our upcoming match against Mexico and starting on the road toward qualifying for the 2014 FIFA World Cup."

Although the U.S. federation discussed the job with Klinsmann in the past, the coach's desire for extensive authority over the entire U.S. program was considered a point of contention.

Klinsmann, who turns 47 on Saturday, has a considerable World Cup pedigree. As a player, he scored 11 goals in three World Cups, 1990, 1994 and 1998. That ties him for sixth on the all-time scoring list, just behind Pele.

Klinsmann was a key cog for West Germany's 1990 World Cup-winning team and the German team's captain from 1994 to 1998. He retired in 1998 and moved to the United States shortly afterward.

Germany coach Joachim Loew, who was Klinsmann's assistant before becoming his successor, wished him well — and expects big changes.

"I am happy for Juergen, that he has found a new challenge and I wish him a lot of success," Loew said. "The way we know Juergen, he'll go into the job with power and shake up a lot of things."

The German football federation said Loew, federation president Theo Zwanziger and three other top officials were told by Klinsmann by telephone that he was about to sign the contract with U.S. Soccer.

Klinsmann took over as coach of the German national team in July 2004, after the team had a poor showing in the 2004 European championships.

Klinsmann led Germany to a third-place finish in the 2006 World Cup.

He went on to coach German club Bayern Munich but lasted less than a full season after falling out of favor with management. He has worked as a consultant since then, most recently with Major League Soccer's Toronto FC.

Bradley's dismissal after five years in charge came as a surprise on Thursday.

He led the U.S. team to considerable success and several big moments. But the U.S. seemed to take a step backward this summer, and a stinging 4-2 loss to Mexico in the Gold Cup final last month — when the U.S. blew a 2-0 lead — appears to have convinced U.S. Soccer officials it was time to make a change. □

Lochte wins

Continued from Page 17

Michael Phelps led off the relay, leaving the U.S. third behind Paul Biedermann of Germany and Yannick Agnel of France. Peter Vanderkaay then put the Americans in front at the halfway mark, but France led at 600 meters before Lochte passed Fabien Gilot with only one lap to go.

"They were talking about me swimming the last leg," Vanderkaay recounted. "I said, 'Are you sure you don't want Ryan on that?' He doesn't surprise me anymore." Earlier in the meet, Lochte won the 200 free and 200 individual medley — relegating Phelps to silver twice. He also set a world record in the 200 IM — the only world mark in swimming since high-tech bodysuits were banned 19 months ago. "I have a lot of confidence, especially what happened with last year," said Lochte, who won six golds to Phelps' five at the Pan Pacific Championships in 2010. "I'm just taking each swim meet at a time, each race at a time, and each year at a time." Lochte has five med-

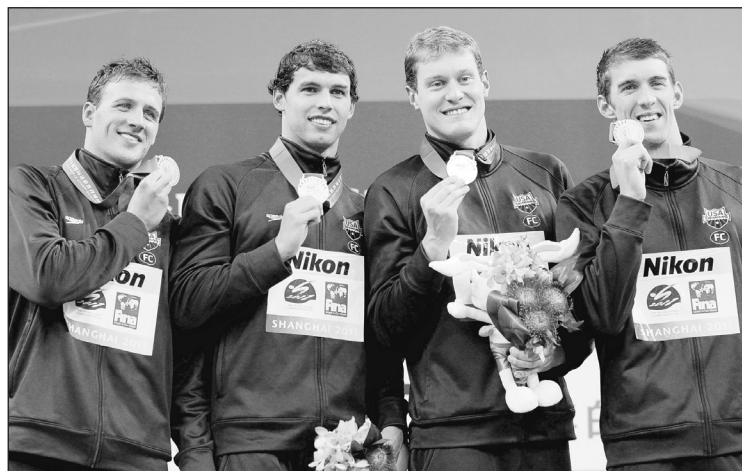
als in all, having also got a bronze in the 4x100 free relay on the opening night of what has turned out to be a stellar competition for the American. He'll also be favored in the 400 IM and could swim the medley relay on the final night of competition Sunday.

Phelps, who swam the leadoff in the relay, has two golds, two silvers and one bronze.

Meanwhile, American Rebecca Soni won the 200 breaststroke to go with her 100 title from Tuesday.

Also, Jeanette Ottesen and Aliaksandra Herasimenia of Belarus finished in a dead heat for gold in the women's 100 freestyle, both clocking 53.45 seconds. Ranomi Kromowidjojo of the Netherlands touched third in 53.66 and Francesca Halsall of Britain and Femke Heemskerk of the Netherlands tied for fourth in 53.72. It was the second time in these championships that there was a dead heat for gold, after Camille Lacourt and Jeremy Stravius of France shared the top spot on the podium in the men's 100 backstroke Tuesday.

World record holder Britta



Steffen dropped out after finishing 16th in morning heats Thursday. The German swept both the 50 and 100 free at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the last worlds in Rome two years ago.

Daniel Gyurta of Hungary overtook Olympic champion Kosuke Kitajima of Japan on the final lap to defend his title in the men's 200 breaststroke.

Gyurta clocked 2:08.41, while Kitajima, who was on a world-record pace with 50 meters to go, took the silver in 2:08.63. Christian vom Lehn of Germany earned the bronze in 2:09.06.

Kitajima was not competing when Gyurta won his first title two years ago.

"It's probably the biggest day of my life because ever since I started taking part in the world champi-

onships in 2003, I've tried to catch (Kitajima) and now I've succeeded," Gyurta said. "Most of the time in my training, I practice the final 50 meters, how to push it hard. I'm really happy I managed to implement it for this race."

In the 200 back, Lochte hardly celebrated after hitting the wall in 1:52.96, more than a second in front of silver medalist Ryosuke Irie of Japan, while another American, Tyler Clary, took bronze.

Soni was being tapped for a world record in the 200 breast but struggled in the second half of the race, touching in 2:21.47 to hold off a late comeback from Yuliya Efimova of Russia. Efimova took silver in 2:22.22 and Martha McCabe of Canada grabbed bronze in 2:24.81. □

Study calls approval process for medical devices flawed

BARRY MEIER

© 2011 New York Times

The government's system for regulating many medical devices like artificial hips should be abandoned and replaced because it fails to examine their safety and effectiveness before sale, according to a report released Friday by one of the nation's top scientific groups.

The report's unequivocal finding was unexpected, and it unleashed reactions including outright rejection by industry officials, an embrace by patient groups and seeming disbelief from federal regulators, who had commissioned the review.

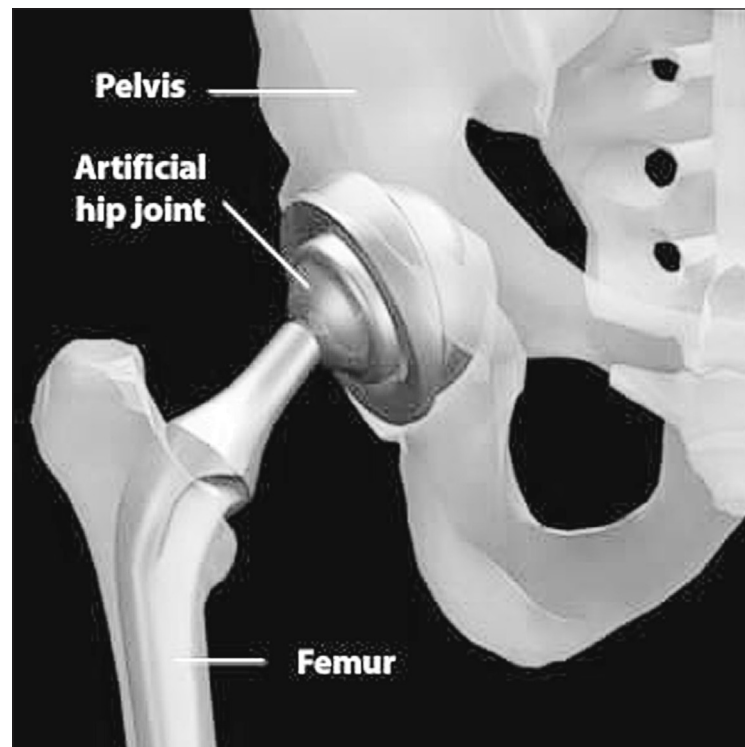
The report by the Institute of Medicine follows several high-profile recalls of medical devices in recent years, like one involving so-called metal-on-metal artificial hips that have failed in thousands of patients, crippling some of them. In its report, the panel found that existing rules used to approve many devices were never intended to play the critical role of screening out dangerous or ineffective products.

The panel urged the Food and Drug Administration to devise a new approval system for so-called moderate risk devices — a category that now includes artificial hips, external heart defibrillators and hospital pumps — concluding that the current one was not fixable.

"If you want to make sure that a product is safe and effective, you have to start by asking the question whether it is safe and effective," said William Vodra, a member of the 12-person panel assembled by Institute of Medicine and a lawyer who has worked closely with device producers. The Institute of Medicine, a part of the National Academy of Sciences, is a widely-respected organization that is asked to review many complex public health issues.

It is not immediately clear what impact, if any, the report will have or how its findings can be implement-

ed; the recommendations are only advisory to the FDA. But at a minimum it quickly defined the boundaries of what is likely to be a high-powered Washington lobbying battle in coming months over the outlines of future device regulation.



Even before the report's release, allies of industry had waged an aggressive campaign to discredit it and had taken legal steps intended to bar the FDA from adopting its recommendations. On Friday, a trade group that represents device industry giants like Medtronic, Boston Scientific and Johnson & Johnson dismissed the report, saying it did not deserve serious consideration from Congress or the Obama administration. "This would be a disservice to patients and the public health," Stephen J. Ubl, the head of that group, the Advanced Medical Technology Association, said in a statement.

For their part, patient groups and some doctors applauded the panel's finding, saying that it was urgent to create a system that examined a device's benefits and harms before large numbers of patients were exposed to it.

Dr. Gregory D. Curfman, the editor of The New England Journal of Medicine, a leading publication, called

the study "path breaking in its conclusions."

FDA officials appeared to be caught off-guard. In 2009, the agency had asked the Institute of Medicine to undertake the study in order to examine specific procedures that

the agency might employ to strengthen one of the regulatory pathways that it uses to approve medical devices. Instead, it got a report that determined the system's legal underpinning was hopelessly flawed.

The study reviewed a system known as the 510(k) clearance process under which moderate-risk products are approved by the FDA. It did not examine devices that carry the highest risk to patients if they fail, like implanted heart defibrillators. Those products go through a separate regulatory pathway that requires extensive testing before sale. The big problem, the study found, is that the federal law that created the 510(k) pathway, the Medical Device Amendments of 1976, required producers of such products only to show that they were "substantially equivalent," or similar, to one already on the market. The committee's report emphasized that its members believed most medical devices in use were safe and beneficial. □

Nurse struggles to save starving Somali children

K. HOURELD

Associated Press

DADAAB, Kenya (AP) — Nurse Serat Amin works in the world's largest refugee camp treating the stream of starving children coming into Kenya from famine-struck Somalia, and although he has painful memories of the children who have died, watching the weak get stronger gives him the courage to carry on. "You can see if a child is getting better just from the face of the parent," he said. "Making a difference is what keeps me here." Amin works at a stabilization ward at the International

when he arrived, has put on 3.5 ounces (100 grams) in the past few days. The wailing babies are weighed in a wicker basket suspended from the ceiling.

The U.N. says parts of Somalia held by Islamist rebels are suffering from famine, and a total of 11.3 million people in the Horn of Africa need aid. Amin said the situation is the worst he's seen it — they've had up to 42 babies in his ward for malnourished babies at a time, a sevenfold increase at the hospital since the beginning of the year. The hospital is just one of three treating Somalis refugees in



Abdulle Ibrahim, holds his son Adam Ibrahim at the International Rescue Committee, IRC, clinic in the town of Dadaab, Kenya, Friday, July 29, 2011. The hospital is just one of three treating Somalis refugees in Dadaab camp. Most of the children are also suffering from pneumonia and other diseases after hunger weakened their immune systems.

(AP Photo/Schalk van Zuydam)

Rescue Committee hospital in the Dadaab refugee camp, where dozens of tiny children with stick-thin limbs and oversize heads loll on plastic mattresses. Mothers use their fringed shawls to flap the humid aid around their babies' faces while patient nurses poke intravenous needles into tiny hands. Amin, walking about the ward in his yellow T-shirt, knows them all. "Most come in here very sick. Mihag was unconscious when he came," said Amin, speaking of a tiny 7-month-old the same size as an infant. "But today he is picking up a bit." The child, which weighed as much as a newborn

Dadaab camp.

Most of the children are also suffering from pneumonia and other diseases after hunger weakened their immune systems. That's particularly painful for Amin: his own cousin lost his eyesight after suffering from malnutrition and measles. It's what led him into nutritional medicine in the first place. Now the wards are full of hungry babies with medical complications. On Friday, there were eight more patients than beds, so women had to share overnight. "I've asked UNICEF to come with some tents so we can set them up outside and start treating more people," said Amin. □

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Yahoo settles Alibaba dispute, stock still sinks

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Yahoo Inc. has settled a dispute tarnishing a key investment in China, but the truce didn't bring much peace of mind to the embattled Internet company's disillusioned shareholders.

The complex agreement announced Friday revolves around the spinoff of an online payment service formerly owned by China's Alibaba Group, an emerging Internet powerhouse partially owned by Yahoo.

Alibaba spun off the payment service, Alipay, earlier this year in a move that Yahoo shareholders didn't learn about until it was disclosed in a May 10 regulatory filing in the U.S. Yahoo's shares have lost a quarter of their value since that bombshell, reflecting investor concerns that the spinoff had diminished the value of Yahoo's 43 percent stake in Alibaba.

The settlement will require Alipay to share nearly half its profits with Alibaba.

It will culminate in Alipay writing a check of \$2 billion to \$6 billion to Alibaba if it becomes successful enough to pursue an initial public offering of stock within the next decade.

A big chunk of that money eventually could flow to Yahoo and Alibaba's other major shareholder, Japan's Softbank Corp., which also signed off on the Alipay agreement.

The terms confirmed what investors had suspected all along: Yahoo won't make as much money off of its Alibaba investment as it

would have if Alipay hadn't been spun off into a separate company controlled by a group led by Alibaba CEO Jack Ma.

Instead of owning all of Alipay, Alibaba now owns a 37.5 percent stake in the service.

Alibaba's potential windfall from an Alipay IPO has now been capped at \$6 billion, a ceiling that might look low if Alipay can realize its ambition of becoming the China's equivalent of PayPal, which has steadily risen in value since eBay Inc. bought it for \$1.5 billion in 2002.

The chief financial officers of Yahoo and Alibaba did their best to sell the Alipay settlement as good deal for all parties involved, but Wall Street didn't appear to be buying the rationale.

After initially jumping on news of the deal, Yahoo shares had slipped 33 cents, or 2.4 percent, to \$13.17 in afternoon trading Friday. "Alipay agreement: better than nothing, but not that great," J.P. Morgan analyst Doug Anmuth wrote in a Friday note that summed up the market's sentiment.

The sour reaction keeps the pressure on Yahoo CEO Carol Bartz, whose inability to turn around the company or boost its stock after two and half years on the job has spurred talk on Wall Street that she might be replaced before her contract expires in January 2013. Yahoo has consistently indicated that Bartz has the support of the company's board, which hired her despite her lack of Internet experience.

Bartz, 62, also has had a rocky relationship with Alibaba's Ma, another source of worry for Yahoo shareholders.

That's because Alibaba has emerged as a prized asset while Yahoo's own revenue has been falling during Bartz's tenure. □



This file photo taken June 7, 2010, shows a sign for Yahoo! in New York. Yahoo Inc., reports quarterly financial results Tuesday, July 19, 2011, after the market close.

Associated Press



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Samsung second quarter profit slides 18 percent

KELLY OLSEN

AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) —

Samsung's net profit slid 18 percent in the second quarter as weakness in semiconductors and liquid crystal displays countered the electronics giant's growing strength in smartphones.

Samsung, the world's biggest manufacturer of memory chips, LCDs and flat screen televisions, earned 3.51 trillion won (\$3.33 billion) in the three months ended June 30, it said Friday in a regulatory filing. Samsung earned 4.28 trillion won the same period last year.

Samsung has suffered this year due to slack prices for electronic components amid oversupply and weak demand. Net profit slumped 30 percent in the first quarter amid declines in memory chip prices and reduced profitability in LCDs and TVs.

Second quarter sales at the Suwon, South Korea-based company rose 4.1 percent to 39.4 trillion won from 37.9 trillion won a year earlier.

"We were confronted with a difficult business environment overall," Robert Yi, a Samsung vice president, said on an earnings conference call. Global economic uncertainties persisted,

and consumer demand for products such as personal computers and televisions was "soft."

He added that PC and TV demand weakness may continue in the current third quarter given that the global economic recovery remains unclear.

Yi said Samsung's revenue gain was "mainly due to strong handset performance led by continuing success of our smartphones," though emphasized that smartphones and tablets face intensifying competition. Both operating profit and sales in Samsung's memory business fell as weak global personal computer sales suppressed demand for DRAM, or dynamic random access memory, chips used in the devices, the company said in a release.

Samsung's display panel business racked up an operating loss of 210 billion won, reversal from profit of 880 billion won the year before, with sales declining 9 percent as LCD prices fell.

Yi called the results in that sector "quite disappointing."

Unlike in the past, the company did not provide specific figures for individual product sales volumes and prices during the quarter.

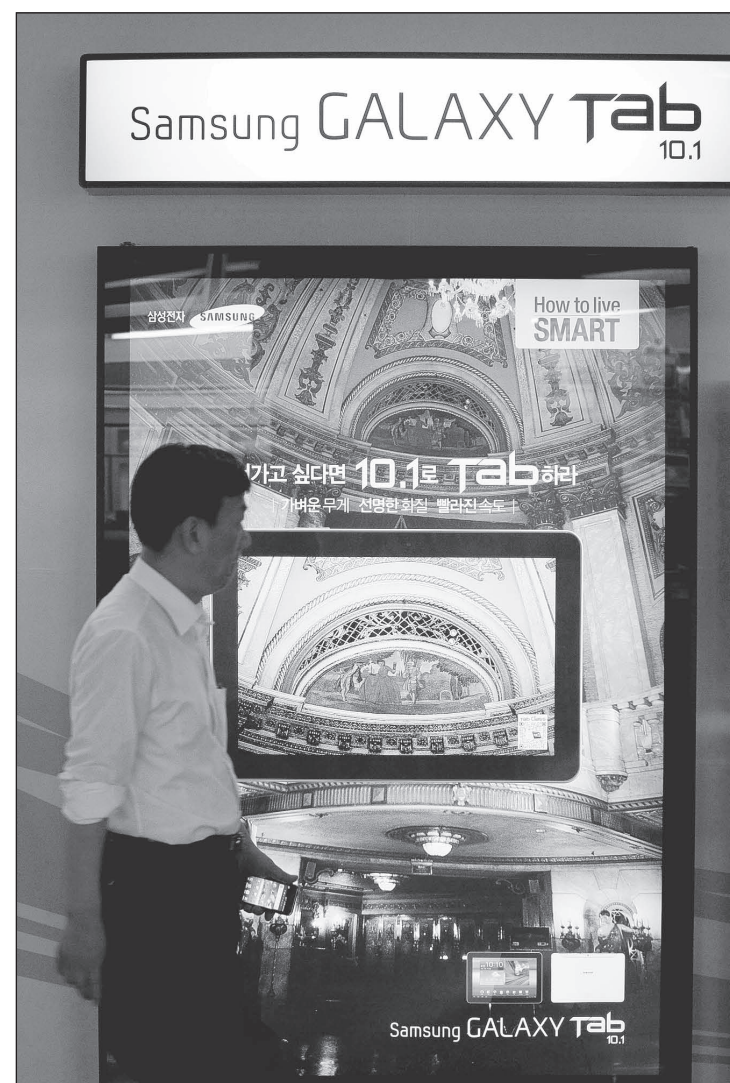
Yi cited "increased risks that the information we provide may adversely affect our own businesses" as among reasons for the company's decision to not give such details.

Lee Min-hee, an analyst at Dongbu Securities in Seoul, said that worries about giving rival companies an edge could be a reason for the move.

"Many competitors are watching their peers' business results," Lee said of technology companies, and can derive information such as manufacturing and operating costs from details about unit sales and prices. The bright spot in the second quarter continued to be mobile phones.

Revenues in the company's mobile communications business, which includes phones, rose 45 percent from the year before. Sales of mobile phones increased from the previous quarter on the back of the company's flagship Galaxy S II smartphone.

Samsung, which ranks No. 2 in mobile phones behind Finland's Nokia Corp., has sold more than 5 million units globally of the updated smartphone since it went on



sale in late April.

Samsung expects demand for mobile phones to increase 15 percent in the second half of this year driven by consumers upgrading to smartphones, it said in the release.

Shin Jong-kyun, president of the company's mobile communications business, has said previously that the company's sales target for

mobile phones this year is 300 million handsets. Out of that total, the company expects 60 million to be smartphones.

Shares in Samsung, which announced results before South Korea's stock market opened, rose 0.8 percent to close Friday at 844,000 won. The company's stock price has declined 11 percent so far this year. □

Google buys about 1,000 IBM patents

By PETER SVENSSON

AP Technology Writer |

NEW YORK (AP) — Google Inc. has bought about 1,000 pending and issued patents from IBM Corp. in its quest to shore up its defenses against suits by other technology companies, according to documents filed with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Google and IBM spokesmen wouldn't comment Friday on the purchase.

The patent transfers were recorded two weeks ago and cover a range of technologies, many of which have little to do with Google's Internet search and advertising business. One covers ways of automatically adjusting a clock, another deals with surface treatments for electrical contacts. But even patents that have little to do with Google's business can be useful ammunition in the hyper-litigious technology world. If it's sued over patents by a company whose business relies on technologies covered by Google's patents, Google can file a retaliatory lawsuit.

Phone makers that use Google Inc.'s An-

droid software are being sued by Apple Inc. and Microsoft Corp. As a young company, Google has few patents of its own to counter with.

Kent Walker, Google's general counsel, wrote in a blog post in April that the explosion in patent litigation threatens to stifle innovation. "But as things stand today, one of a company's best defenses against this kind of litigation is (ironically) to have a formidable patent portfolio, as this helps maintain your freedom to develop new products and services," Walker wrote.

Earlier this month, Google participated in an auction for a collection of 6,000 patents from Nortel, a bankrupt Canadian maker of telecommunications equipment. It was outbid by a consortium including Apple that paid \$4.5 billion.

In the past year, Google has also bought patents from Verizon Communications Inc. and Motorola Inc.

The patent sale was first reported by the blog SEO by the Sea, which follows Google. □

Nintendo shares plunge after 3DS price cut

TOMOKO A. HOSAKA, Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Shares of Nintendo Co. took a beating Friday, losing more than a fifth of their value at one point, after the Japanese video game giant announced a worldwide price cut for its new 3DS in an effort to salvage poor sales.

The move spooked investors and analysts, who had expected a quarterly loss but were taken aback by the severity of Nintendo's woes.

The stock fell more than 20 percent in the morning but pared losses in the afternoon. It closed down 12.2 percent at 12,290 yen.

Nintendo on Thursday posted a net loss of 25.5 billion yen (\$324 million) in the April-June period, almost on par with its loss a year earlier. Sales during the quarter slumped more than 50 percent.

The numbers forced Nintendo to slash its profit forecast for the full fiscal year through March by more than 80 percent. The Kyoto-based company blamed its lackluster performance on a dearth of hit titles for the Wii and 3DS handheld device, as well as a strong yen. □

Recession risks up amid slow growth, debt standoff

CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER

PAUL WISEMAN

AP Economics Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. economy is at risk of slipping into another recession.

It nearly stalled in the first six months of the year, the government reported Friday. Economic growth was feeble in the second quarter and practically non-existent in the first.

The new picture of an economy far weaker than most analysts had expected suddenly made a second recession a more serious threat — and the threat will rise if Congress can't reach a deal to raise the government's debt limit.

"The only question now is, how much weaker could things get?" says Nariman Behravesh, chief economist at IHS Global Insight.

In April, May and June, the economy grew at a 1.3

percent annual rate, below expectations. And the government changed its growth figure for January, February and March to 0.4 percent, far below the previous estimate of 1.9 percent.

Combined, the first half of the year amounts to the worst six-month performance since the Great Recession officially ended in June 2009.

Over the past year, the gross domestic product — the total output of goods and services in the United States, and the broadest measure of the economy's health — recorded actual growth of 1.6 percent.

Since 1950, year-to-year growth has dipped below 2 percent 12 times. Ten of those times, the economy was already in recession or soon fell into one, says Mark Vitner, senior economist at Wells Fargo Securities.

Normal economic growth is closer to 3 percent.

High gasoline prices leave people with less money to spend on other goods and services. And not all spending on gas contributes to the U.S. economy because some of the money goes to oil-producing countries. GDP figures are also inflation-adjusted, so spending \$1 more for a gallon doesn't mean \$1 of additional help to the economy.

Manufacturing disruptions from the Japan earthquake, cuts in state and local government and tighter household budgets have weighed down the economy, too.

Add to those problems the uncertainty fanned by the political stalemate in Washington, with Republicans refusing to raise the federal government's \$14.3 trillion borrowing limit unless Democrats agree to deep fed-



In this June 21, 2011 photo, Shell gas worker Toke Fusi changes gas prices down at a Shell gas station in Menlo Park, Calif. The economy slowed in the first six months of 2011 to its weakest pace since the recession ended. High gas prices and scant income gains forced Americans to sharply pull back on spending.

Associated Press

Moody's says U.S. should retain top credit rating

MARTIN CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Moody's Investors Service said late Friday that the United States should be able to keep its triple-A credit rating as long as Washington works out a deal that lets it continue to pay bondholders.

The credit rating agency said it thinks that even if the nation's \$14.3 trillion borrowing limit isn't raised by Tuesday's deadline, the government would give priority to making interest payments on its debt and thereby avoid a default.

Moody's had warned July 13 that the country's credit rating was in danger of being downgraded because of the stalemate in Congress over raising the debt limit.

In its statement Friday, however, Moody's said that based on its current review it would likely rate the U.S. debt as triple-A but with a negative outlook. That would mean that there is a

possibility of a downgrade in the future.

"If there were a default on a Treasury debt obligation, a downgrade would likely follow, even if the default were swiftly cured and investors suffered no permanent losses," Moody's said in its new report.

Credit rating agencies assess the riskiness of debt issued by companies and governments. The three major agencies — Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings — have all raised warnings in recent months that they might downgrade the U.S. government's triple-A rating.

Such a downgrade would send shockwaves through the financial system. The government has had the highest credit rating for nearly a century.

That rating has allowed the United States to pay the lowest interest rates possible to finance Treasury debt.

The announcement by

Moody's on Friday followed favorable comments Wednesday by Devven Sharma, the president of Standard & Poor's. He told a congressional committee that some of the deficit-cutting plans Congress is considering would lower the U.S. debt burden enough to allow the country to retain its triple-A rating.

However, Sharma said that S&P would not make a final determination until it had a much clearer view of what package of deficit-cutting proposals Congress would be adopting as part of a deal to raise the debt limit. However, he said that previous reports indicating that Congress would need to make \$4 trillion in deficit cuts over 10 years to retain a triple-A rating were not accurate.

He declined during his testimony to be specific about the threshold, although he said the plan would have to make a credible attack on the U.S. deficit problems. □

eral spending cuts on the GOP's terms.

Without an agreement, the Treasury Department says, the government won't have enough money to pay all its bills after Tuesday. It will have to cut spending by about 40 percent and choose which programs and beneficiaries receive money and which don't.

The dismal second-quarter report led economists to reduce their estimates for growth in the second half of the year. Capital Economics, which had expected the economy to grow 2.5 percent this year, now says 2 percent looks more likely.

Joel Naroff of Naroff Economic Advisors says he's waiting until the debt-limit deadline passes to revise his economic forecasts for the rest of 2011. He knows he'll scale back his estimates. He just doesn't know how much.

If a deal isn't reached for another month, Naroff estimates there's an 80 to 90 percent chance that the spending cuts would tip the economy into recession. Even if there is a deal, it would likely trigger significant spending cuts that would slow growth, at least in the short run.

"You kick the federal government, and the economy is going to be doubled over in pain," Naroff says.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke and other economists have warned Congress against cutting too much too soon because the economy remains so fragile.

The economy needs to expand so it can create jobs for a growing population. It must grow at a 2.5 percent annual rate to keep the unemployment rate from rising and at a 5 percent rate to bring unemployment down significantly.

In a Twitter message, economist Justin Wolfers of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School said he thinks there's a 40 percent chance the economy has already been in a recession for the past four months.

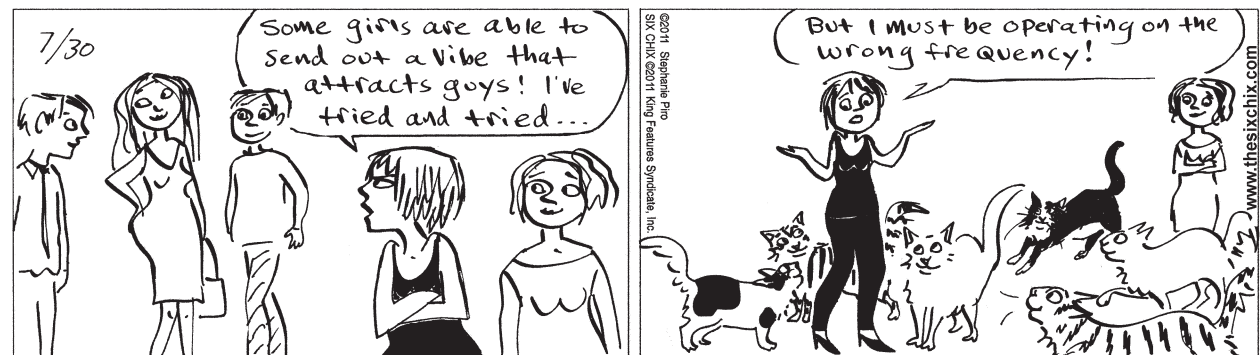
Normally, when the economy is this weak, the government spends more and the Federal Reserve aggressively tries to stimulate growth.

But President Barack Obama's \$862 billion stimulus package of spending programs and tax cuts ran out last year — and won't be revived by a Congress focused on cutting government debt. □

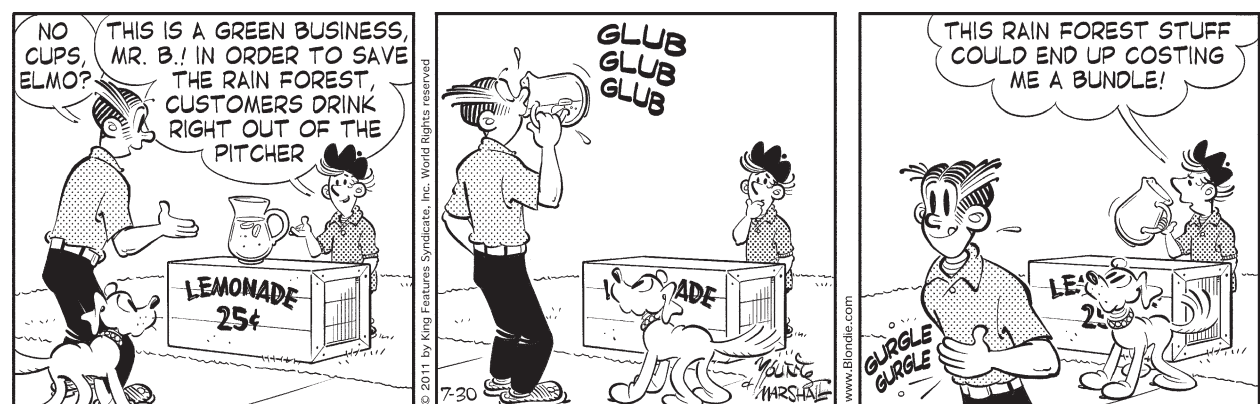
Mutts



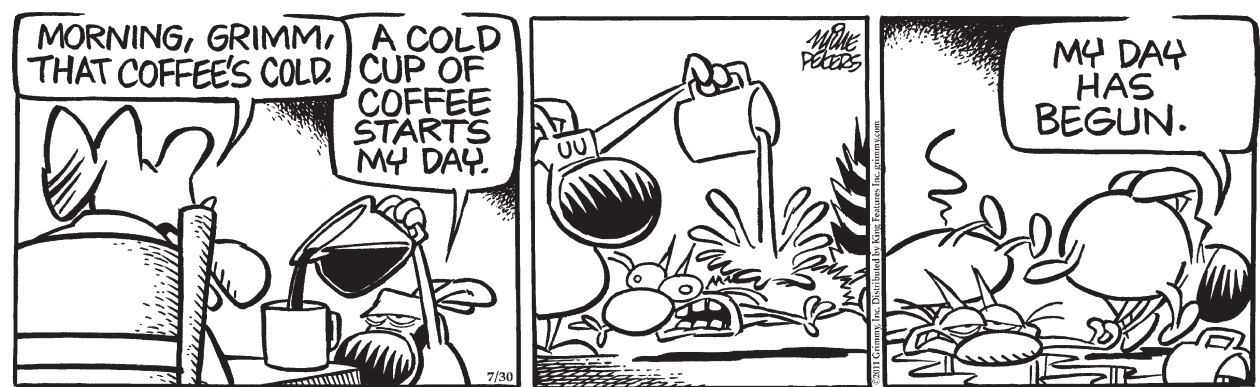
6 Chix



Blondie



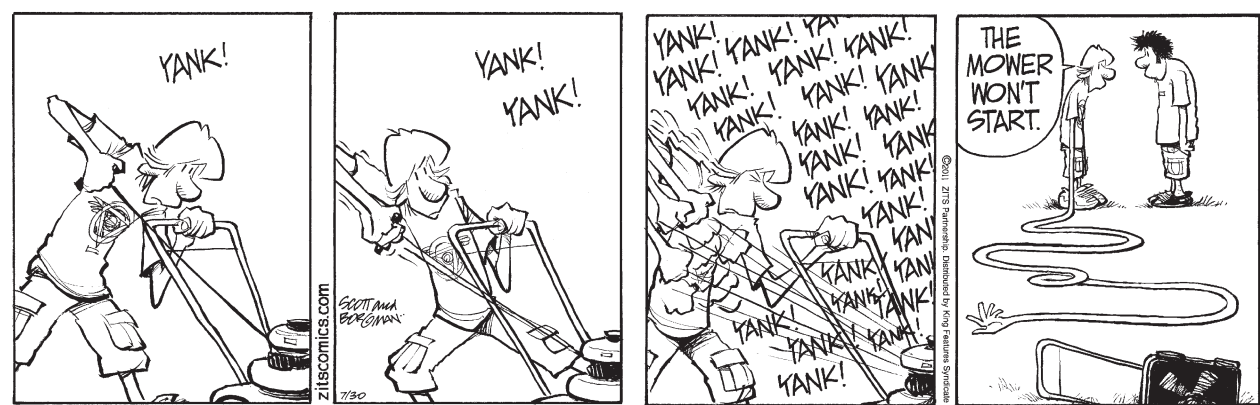
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			9	6				
	1	6				8	4	
	4						6	
4			5		2			6
				9				
2			3		1			9
	6						8	
	5	2				1	9	
			7	4				

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 7/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

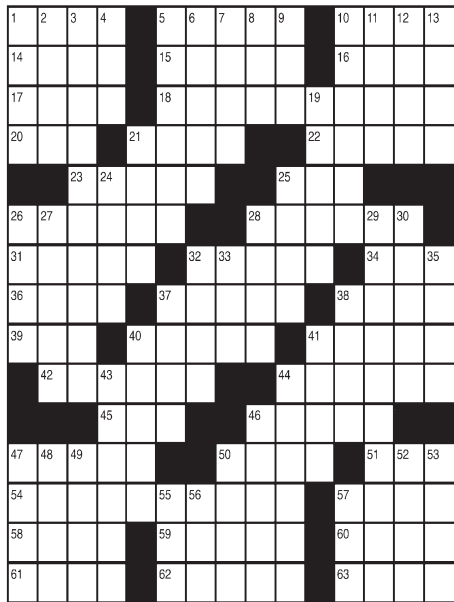
3	2	9	5	7	8	6	1	4
1	5	8	2	4	6	3	7	9
4	7	6	9	1	3	5	2	8
9	1	5	4	8	7	2	6	3
7	3	4	6	5	2	8	9	1
6	8	2	3	9	1	4	5	7
2	4	7	8	6	9	1	3	5
8	9	3	1	2	5	7	4	6
5	6	1	7	3	4	9	8	2

ACROSS

- 1 Likelihood
- 5 Confused brawl
- 10 Craving; yen
- 14 Metal thread
- 15 Popeye's love
- 16 Anthropologist
- Margaret _
- 17 _ though; albeit
- 18 Evolving
- 20 Body of water
- 21 Paella
- ingredient
- 22 Spree
- 23 Selective
- Service role
- 25 Spoil
- 26 Two-pointer in a football game
- 28 Put down
- 31 Ooze out
- 32 Zahn or Abdul
- 34 Moving truck
- 36 " _ well that ends well"
- 37 Daunted
- 38 Volcano output
- 39 _ Aviv, Israel
- 40 Peanut casing
- 41 Rabbit cousins
- 42 Circulatory or respiratory
- 44 Capital of the Philippines
- 45 Permit
- 46 Purple shade
- 47 Seaweeds
- 50 Bouquet holder
- 51 Pixie
- 54 Beheading machine
- 57 Fly high
- 58 Consequently
- 59 Less colorful
- 60 Greek liqueur
- 61 _ milk; nonfat drink
- 62 Lock of hair
- 63 Secondhand

DOWN

- 1 Is in debt
- 2 Seedy saloon
- 3 In an awful way
- 4 McCain or Boxer: abbr.
- 5 Adapt



Friday's Puzzle Solved

P	E	T	I	T	A	T	O	M	C	A	S	S
A	L	O	N	E	B	A	D	E	A	B	E	T
G	L	O	V	E	A	M	E	N	B	O	N	E
E	S	T	I	M	A	T	E	A	R	O	U	S
T	I	D	E	S	C	O	O	T	E	R		
F	R	I	E	N	D	I	T	E	M	S		
R	E	D	G	E	E	S	E	P	E	A	L	S
O	D	O	R	D	A	L	E	S	S	N	I	P
M	O	L	E	S	G	E	L	I	D	E	R	R
C	A	V	E	S	L	E	E	W	A	Y		
S	C	H	O	L	A	R	C	O	P	Y		
P	R	O	V	E	N	B	E	S	I	E	G	E
R	I	S	E	I	D	E	A	C	L	E	A	R
A	M	E	R	S	E	A	S	T	E	A	S	E
T	E	S	S	H	E	R	E	S	T	R	E	W

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- 43 Zigzag skiing
- 44 Money
- hoarders
- 46 Freeway
- divisions
- 47 Grows old
- 48 Move furtively
- 49 Hit movie for Leslie Caron
- 50 Contemptible
- 52 Labyrinth
- 53 Incite; urge
- 55 _ for; choose
- 56 Street paver's substance
- 57 Very old French coin

Today in History

Today is Saturday, July 30, the 211th day of 2011. There are 154 days left in the year

Highlights in history on this date:

1419 - Czech Hussites throw seven members of the Prague town council from a window and start a rebellion. King Wenceslas IV dies of a heart attack upon hearing of the incident.

1619 - America's first representative assembly convenes in Jamestown, Virginia.

1646 - French troops, aided by the Swedish army, invade Bavaria to bring Thirty Years' War to a close.

1974 - Greece, Turkey and Britain sign declaration for cease-fire agreement on Cyprus.

1977 - Syrian soldiers of Arab League's peace-keeping force in Lebanon set up gun positions around two main Palestinian refu-



Today is Lisa Kudrow's birthday

gee camps to help control guerrillas.

1982 - Panamanian President Aristides Royo Sanchez resigns two years before the end of his six-year term under pressure from the country's military leaders.

1988 - Bomb explodes at busy shopping plaza outside Johannesburg, South Africa, injuring dozens of people.

1989 - Poland's government announces controversial program to end food price controls and meat rationing.

1990 - On his fourth day being held hostage, Prime Minister Arthur N.R. Robinson of Trinidad offers to resign, call elections and grant his captors amnesty.

1991 - U.N. weapons experts report finding 46,000 chemical weapons in Iraq, about four times what Baghdad had declared.

1993 - Guards at a Lima, Peru, museum walk out with golden relics of the Incas — most of which they later melt down.

1995 - Rebel Serbs in Croatia retreat and promise not to

2008 — A team of European scientists unveils a new method for extracting images hidden under old masters' paintings, recreating a color portrait of a woman's face unseen since Vincent van Gogh painted over it in 1887.

2009 — Iranian police fire tear gas and beat protesters to disperse thousands chanting "Neda lives!" at a memorial for victims of post-election violence held at the gravesite of the woman whose death made her a symbol of the pro-reform movement.

2010 - President Nicolas Sarkozy says that he wants to revoke the French citizenship of immigrants who put the lives of police officers in danger as part of a "national war" on delinquency.

Today's Birthdays:

Giorgio Vasari, Italian painter (1511-1574); Emily Bronte, British author (1818-1848); Henry Ford, U.S. auto pioneer (1863-1947); Casey Stengel, U.S. baseball player/manager (1891-1975); Henry Moore, British sculptor (1898-1986); Peter Bogdanovich, U.S. producer/director (1939--); Paul Anka, Canadian singer (1941--); Arnold Schwarzenegger, actor/politician (1947--); Laurence Fishburne, U.S. actor (1961-); Lisa Kudrow, U.S. actress (1963--).

Thought For Today:

Incompetents invariably make trouble for people other than themselves — Larry McMurtry, U.S. writer (1936 -). □

Classifieds

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Associated Realtors For Sale
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Dr. van Trigt

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Oranjestad 582-4000
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Tel: 583-8989
Foundation Amor pa Prohimo
Tel: 583-3354 / 586-6976
Women in Difficulties Foundation
Tel: 583-5400

BECKY BOHRER
Associated Press

A black and white photograph of a polar bear walking on a frozen body of water. The bear is in the middle ground, moving from right to left. Its reflection is clearly visible in a pool of water in the foreground. The background shows a flat, icy landscape with some distant structures or ice formations. The overall scene is desolate and cold.

Associated Press

Beyond the climate change debate, the investigation also focuses attention on an Obama administration policy intended to protect scientists from political interference.

[illegible]

Appeals court sides with J.Lo in home video fight



Actress and singer Jennifer Lopez arrives at the American Idol Finale in Los Angeles.

(AP Photo/Matt Sayles, file)

A. McCARTNEY

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — An appeals court sided Friday with Jennifer Lopez and ordered that an invasion of privacy lawsuit she filed against her first husband be handled in arbitration rather than through a public court case. The ruling by California's 2nd District Court of Appeal states that Lopez's attorneys provided a Los Angeles judge with plenty of information supporting her request that she had a binding arbitration agreement with ex-husband Ojani Noa.

Lopez sued Noa for \$10 million in November 2009 after he and his agent announced plans to use portions of 11 hours of home videos to produce a movie based on the couple's relationship. The couple was married in 1997, but the union lasted just 11 months.

A settlement agreement between the two prohibits Noa from "disclosing for monetary gain any private or intimate details about Lopez or Noa's relationship with Lopez." It also binds any of his agents to the same terms.

The videos, which both sides agree do not depict the singer and actress in sexual situations, have been blocked for release by a judge. Noa's agent, Ed Meyer, however threatened to release clips from the videos earlier this year, which prompted a judge to order them to be stored in a bank safe deposit box with restricted access in June.

The court ordered Friday that Meyer is also subject to the arbitration provisions.

He wrote in an email that he will appeal the ruling to the California Supreme Court. Noa's attorney, Christopher Lauria, did not immediately return a phone message seeking comment.

Lopez, 42, won \$545,000 in damages and attorney fees in 2007 in another lawsuit that blocked Noa from publishing a ghostwritten tell-all book. She and her third husband, singer Marc Anthony, announced earlier this month that they were ending their seven-year marriage. □

'A-list'? They must be grading on a curve

JEREMY W. PETERS

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NEW YORK — If the weave-pulling, table-flipping antics of the "Real Housewives" seem crass, you probably haven't caught "The A-List" on Logo yet.

Consider a few highlights from last week's premiere of the second season of the show, which follows a cast of gay men drinking, fighting and swanning around New York:

Nude webcam photos of one of the stars, a former Air Force officer turned model named Reichen Lehmkuhl, surface just in time for cameras to capture his "astonished" cast mates' critiques.

Another regular, Austin Armacost, who is contemplating a bare-all photo spread of his own in Playgirl, throws a punch at another cast mate but misses, accidentally clipping the new female cast member, Nyasha Zimucha. Zimucha, who runs a wig and hair-



From left: Reichen Lehmkuhl, Austin Armacost, Derek Saathoff, Ryan Nickulas, Nyasha Zimucha, Rodiney Santiago, TJ Kelly, the cast of the "A-list." Logo says that the "A-List" is its second-most-popular show, with ratings that averaged 156,000 viewers per episode last season.

(Logo via The New York Times)

that in reality television, watchable doesn't always mean likeable. In fact, Logo says that the "A-List" is its second-most-popular show, with ratings that averaged 156,000 viewers per episode last season. Television has routinely depicted gay and lesbian characters for three decades. But despite their frequency (often as sassy

series for Current. "People kept bringing it up. None of us wanted to admit we watched it. But we were all talking about it like 'Oh, are you going to watch the new season?' And then someone would say, 'No, it's such a terrible show.' Then it came up again. And everybody said, 'Oh it's such a terrible show.'"

Logo, it seems, has created a new gay secret shame. "They're doing something right," Safi said, adding one quibble: The show needs a title that is truer to its characters. "They should call it 'Fighting With Abs.'" Last Saturday night, an evening about as stiflingly hot as any so far this summer in New York, the cast of "The A-List" appeared at Boxers, a gay bar in the Flatiron district where they were filming scenes for the show.

The air-conditioning in the bar wasn't working properly, causing a few of the more muscled members of the cast to unbutton their shirts and roll up their sleeves. The sight of tanned bare flesh, plus the bright lights and camera crews, drew some curious looks from the crowd, most in the vaguely interested way that said, "I don't want them to see me staring and think I care."

Rob Anderson, a 42-year-old pharmaceuticals manufacturing professional from Indianapolis, hovered near the back of the bar and watched as the cast idled between filming scenes. □



An undated handout image of Derek Saathoff, right, in a still from the show "The A-List." Logo says that the "A-List" is its second-most-popular show, with ratings that averaged 156,000 viewers per episode last season.

(Logo via The New York Times)

extension company and employs an assistant whose sole responsibility is to carry her purse, flies into a rage and is escorted away by security guards.

These people make the "Real Housewives," an acknowledged inspiration for the Logo show, look like the graduating class of a fine Swiss finishing school. But whatever their offenses may be, the cast members of "The A-List" have become conversation pieces for many gay men in New York, proving once again

sidekicks, reclusive uncles and artistically inclined roommates), there are relatively few shows that are made for gays, by gays, with mostly gay casts. "The A-List" occupies that niche. But whether it is a cultural blight or just harmless fun is the subject of much debate among its (reluctantly forthcoming) viewers.

"I was at a dinner party two weeks ago and it came up three times," said Bryan Safi, a comedian who stars in "That's Gay," a Web video



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A model wears a creation by Agua Bendita during the Colombia Moda fashion show in Medellin, Colombia.

(AP Photo/Luis Benavides)

The Colombia Moda 2011 a huge success

Colombia Moda keeps reaffirming itself as Colombia's Fashion Week. The 22nd edition of Colombiamoda closed with great success, ratifying why it's the most important business and fashion platform in Latin America, having reached business expectations for US\$95 million. On this occasion 9,428 people attended Colombia Moda.

The support that this year the 1,415 international buyers gave, made possible one of the most successful editions in Colombia Moda's history. Highlighting a commission of 708 invited by Proexport, 450 exhibitors and important delegations like Prada, Aeropostale, Pao d'Azucar and Massimo Costa, head of the company that houses more than 80 showrooms in Milan, as the commercial delegations sent by allies. □



Above and below, Models wear creations by Agua Bendita during the Colombia Moda fashion show in Medellin, Colombia. (AP Photo/Luis Benavides)



Models wear creations by Italy's brand Leitmotiv during the Colombia Moda fashion show in Medellin, Colombia, Thursday, July 28, 2011.

(AP Photo/Luis Benavides)



The Centrist cop-out



PAUL KRUGMAN

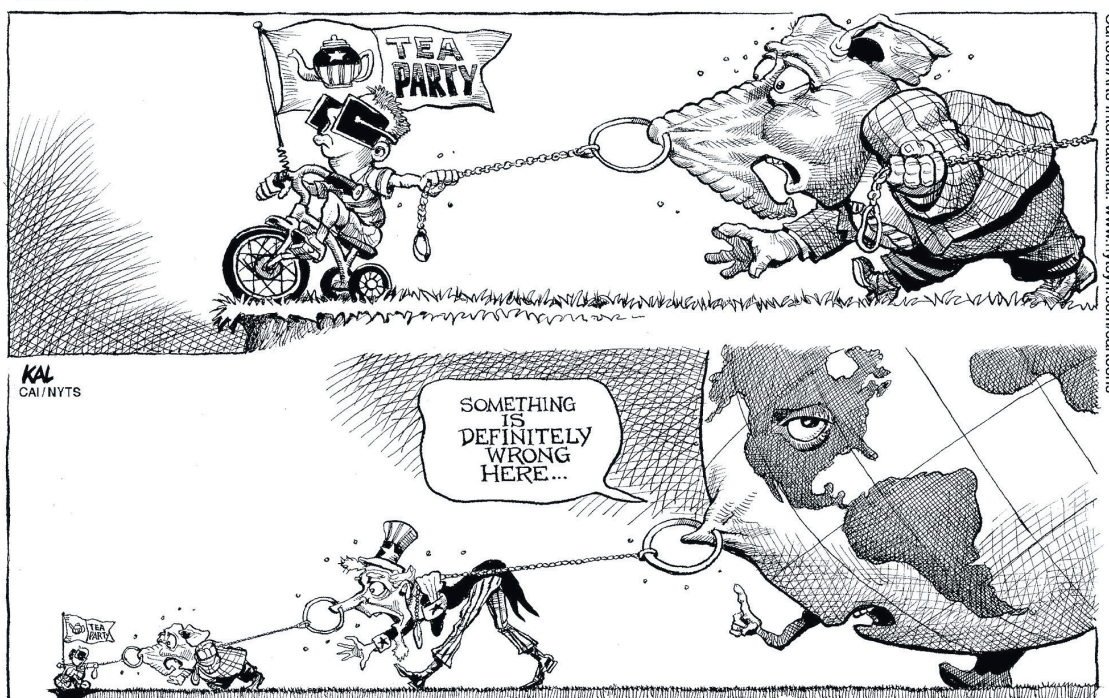
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The facts of the crisis over the debt ceiling aren't complicated. Republicans have, in effect, taken America hostage, threatening to undermine the economy and disrupt the essential business of government unless they get policy concessions they would never have been able to enact through legislation. And Democrats – who would have been justified in rejecting this extortion, altogether – have, in fact, gone a long way toward meeting those Republican demands. As I said, it's not complicated. Yet many people in the news media apparently can't bring themselves to acknowledge this simple reality. News reports portray the parties as equally intransigent; pundits fantasize about some kind of "centrist" uprising, as if the problem were too much partisanship on both sides. Some of us have long complained about the cult of "balance," the insistence on portraying both parties as equally wrong and equally at fault on any issue, never mind the facts. I joked long ago that if one party declared that the earth was flat, the headlines would read "Views Differ on Shape of Planet." But would that cult still rule in a situation as stark as the one we now face, in which one party is clearly engaged in blackmail and the other is dickering over the size of the ransom?

The answer, it turns out, is yes. And this is no laughing matter: The cult of balance has played an important role in bringing us to the edge of disaster. For when reporting on political disputes always implies that both sides are to blame, there is no penalty for extremism. Voters won't punish you for outrageous behavior if all they ever hear is that both sides are at fault. Let me give you an example of what I'm talking about. As you may know, President Barack Obama initially tried to strike a "Grand Bargain" with Republicans over taxes and spending. To do so, he not only chose not to make an issue of GOP extortion, he offered extraordinary concessions on Democratic priorities: an increase in the age of Medicare eligibility, sharp spending cuts and only small revenue increases. As The Times' Nate Silver pointed out, Obama effectively staked out a position that was not only far to

the right of the average voter's preferences, it was if anything a bit to the right of the average Republican voter's preferences. But Republicans rejected the deal. So what was the headline on an Associated Press analysis of that breakdown in negotiations? "Obama, Republicans Trapped by Inflexible Rhetoric." A Democratic president who bends over backward to accommodate the other side – or, if you prefer, who leans so far to the right that he's in danger of falling over – is treated as being just the same as his utterly intransigent opponents. Balance! Which brings me to those "centrist" fantasies. Many pundits view taking a position in the middle of the political spectrum as a virtue in itself. I don't. Wisdom doesn't necessarily reside in the middle of the road, and I want leaders who do the right thing, not the centrist thing. But for those who insist that the center is always the place to be, I have an important piece of information: We already have a centrist president. Indeed, Bruce Bartlett, who served as a policy analyst in the Reagan administration, argues that Obama is in practice a moderate conservative. Bartlett has a point. The president, as we've seen, was willing, even eager, to strike a budget deal that strongly favored conservative priorities.

His health reform was very similar to the reform Mitt Romney installed in Massachusetts. Romneycare, in turn, closely followed the outlines of a plan originally proposed by the right-wing Heritage Foundation. And returning tax rates on high-income Americans to their level during the Roaring Nineties is hardly a socialist proposal. True, Republicans insist that Obama is a leftist seeking a government takeover of the economy, but they would, wouldn't they? The facts, should anyone choose to report them, say otherwise. So what's with the buzz about a centrist uprising? As I see it, it's coming from people who recognize the dysfunctional nature of modern American politics, but refuse, for whatever reason, to acknowledge the one-sided role of Republican extremists in making our system dysfunctional. And it's not hard to guess at their motivation. After all, pointing out the obvious truth gets you labeled as a shrill partisan, not just from the right, but from the ranks of self-proclaimed centrists. But making nebulous calls for centrism, like writing news reports that always place equal blame on both parties, is a big cop-out – a cop-out that only encourages more bad behavior. The problem with American politics right now is Republican extremism, and if you're not willing to say that, you're helping make that problem worse. □



The travails of Elizabeth Warren



JOE NOCERA

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The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, I mean. After 10 months of preparation – hiring staff, creating a management structure, laying out an initial agenda – the bureau officially hit the starting gate Thursday, a year to the day after the Dodd-Frank financial reform bill was signed into law by President Barack Obama. And, of course, the person who hired most of that staff, created that management structure and laid out that agenda – indeed, the person most responsible for the bureau's very existence – is departing. This coming week will be Elizabeth Warren's last at the bureau. So accustomed are we to our nation's poisoned politics that nobody even thinks this is strange.

"In a world in which the Republicans would have let me have the job, yeah, I would have been glad to have stayed," she told me this week when I asked if she was disappointed that Obama had decided, in the end, to nominate Richard Cordray, the former attorney general of Ohio, to be the bureau's first director. (Cordray was already on the premises; Warren had recruited him to be the bureau's chief enforcement officer.) "But they made it so clear that was never going to happen."

Led by Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama – whose descent from respected member of the Senate Banking Committee to partisan political hack has been truly stunning – Senate Republicans had vowed to block Warren from ever being able to run the agency she brought to life.

Still, she is pleased that the president chose Cordray: "Rich will be better than good. He's smart, and he's tough. And he probably understands the politics better than I do."

Naturally, Shelby et al. have now promised to block him as well – ostensibly because the bureau requires "structural changes" to make it more "transparent." In fact, the only thing that's transparent is the absurdity of this fig leaf. What the Republicans are trying to do is cripple the new consumer agency before it ever gets the chance to, you know, help consumers. Bankers are their constituency, not consumers.

What has long been striking to anyone following Warren's travails these past 10 months – ever since the president asked her to set up the bureau – is the disparity between what she's actually done versus the Republican demonization of her. It is true that as a Harvard law professor, where she raised hell about the "tricks and traps" too often used by the financial services industry to gouge its customers, she used strong, colorful language. It is easy to see why she might make some bankers nervous.

But in setting the new bureau's priorities, she has mostly stressed the importance of clear disclosure and easy-to-read contracts – so that consumers will be able to understand what they are agreeing to. (It certainly might have helped subprime borrowers avoid a lot of pain had such an agency been in existence during the bubble years.)

"I've never been an ideologue," she told me. "And I thought the

best way to deal with that perception was to put our vision out there.

The vision is clear. Consumers should be able to tell the price and risk of any credit product before they buy it. We want to mow down the fine print. I thought once that was on the table, and it was clear that we were executing on it, the accusations would go away."

But they never did go away. In addition to the Senate threats about blocking her nomination, House Republicans regularly brought her before their committees and acted as if this were the second coming of Joe McCarthy. Patrick McHenry, a Republican from North Carolina – Bank of America's home state – was particularly obnoxious, calling her a liar in one hearing. Republicans would cut off her answers and speak to her in tones ranging from contempt to condescension. The treatment wasn't just disrespectful. It was ugly. And it never stopped.

As for the hearings themselves, she found herself feeling more discouraged than angry.

"So much energy was being wasted on a sideshow that had so little to do with families that are suffering," she said.

"What Richard Shelby says about me doesn't amount to a hill of beans compared to what people are going through in this country. It was a political sideshow."

As for Warren, she is being urged by the Democratic Party to run for Scott Brown's Senate seat in Massachusetts. She's a long way from deciding whether to do so, and, in any case, she has Harvard Law School to return to in the fall. This week, though, she met Warren Buffett for the first time. He took her by the hands and said, "I know a whole lot more bankers than consumers, but they're the ones who need the help." His words made her very happy. □

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